SANCTUM

EARTHSHIP PRODUCTIONS

FADE IN:

TEXT ON SCREEN:

Beneath every continent are millions of miles of limestone caves.

Many are flooded, accessible only to cave divers.

Most remain unexplored.

They represent the last great frontier on Earth...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT/EXT. EXECUTIVE HELICOPTER, PAPUA NEW GUINEA - DAY

An out of focus light reflects the deep blue sparkle of the ocean. The scene has a washed out, bright feel, as if from a distant memory.

TIGHT on the face of JOSH MCGUIRE (17). He's gazing through the copilot window of an AUGUSTA EXECUTIVE HELICOPTER.

He's tall, slightly built and slovenly dressed in skater-punk gear. He has a wisp of a goatee beard and Optic Nerve shades. He looks fidgety, apprehensive. His voice carries the trace of an Australian accent.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
I took off. So what? I can do what I want. I'm not a kid anymore. It ain't all about you.

Suddenly, the scene comes sharply into focus, snapping into bright color as the ROAR of the engines grows louder.

The DELVENET.COM HELICOPTER banks sharply as it clears the coastline of Papua New Guinea.

Lush rainforest as far as the eye can see. In the distance, a range of mist-covered mountains. No sign of civilization. The edge of the last great wilderness.

CARL (AMERICAN ACCENT)
They're calling it what?

Flying the chopper is self-made billionaire CARL HURLEY (30's). Faded jeans and a t-shirt with 'MY OTHER HELICOPTER IS A JET' printed across the front.

VICTORIA
"Hurley's Hole".

Josh smirks at this. He turns around to see VICTORIA ALLAIN (30's) sitting in the rear passenger seat, reading the WALL STREET JOURNAL. She looks tired and jet-lagged in her crumpled business suit, but still manages to retain a natural, understated beauty.

CARL
Goddamn it!

VICTORIA (READING)
"Carl Hurley's latest 'ego tour', to dive the 'Mount Everest' of underwater caves in Papua New Guinea, has already cost over three million dollars and leaves many shareholders questioning his loyalties...

CARL
They can all go to hell.

VICTORIA (READING)
"The thirty-six year old CEO of Delvenet..."

JOSH
Jeez, that's old, man.

CARL
Shut it.

VICTORIA (READING)
"...whose previous stunts include scaling Everest, diving Brittanic and base jumping the Eiffel Tower, is furious at the lack of media coverage his latest expedition... yada yada yada. There's a cartoon as well...

CARL (TO JOSH)
Take over. Keep the horizon above the dash, like I told you.

Josh flashes a quick look at Victoria, lowering his shades as he grabs the CYCLIC STICK. He's obviously trying to impress her.

CARL
No problemo.

VICTORIA (NERVOUS)
Carl!

CARL
Give me that piece of crap.

Victoria shakes her head wearily and tightens her seat belt. Carl snatches the newspaper and gazes down at the headline:

DELVING INTO DEBT. A caricature of Carl, wearing SCUBA EQUIPMENT as he studies a FINANCIAL FLOW CHART hung outside a cave. Another DIVER informs him "That ain't your dive profile: it's your share value".

Josh glances at the cartoon and shares a smile with Victoria. The chopper wobbles slightly. Josh blushes as he snaps his attention back to flying.

CARL
This expedition's been a cluster fuck from start to finish. No disrespect, Josh, but your father's full of shit.

JOSH (AWKWARD LAUGH)
Yeah...

CARL (SARCASTIC)
The world's greatest cave diver. All he can find down there are dead-ends. No wonder we lost press coverage

VICTORIA
You're insane. Frustrated astronauts, all of you.

Carl gazes down at the rainforest.

CARL
There could be miles of unexplored passage down there. Just waiting to be discovered.

VICTORIA
Yeah, well. You'd better discover it quick. Here's your schedule for next week.

She hands him a sheet of paper covered in colored bars.

CARL
Shit!

Carl RIPS up the schedule in frustration.

CARL
Shit! shit! shit!

A long and uncomfortable silence. Victoria leans forward toward Josh, a smirk on her face.

VICTORIA (DRAMATIC VOICE)
Looks like 'Hurley's Hole' may remain forever...unprobed.

Josh cracks up LAUGHING.

VRRRROOM! The helicopter LURCHES VIOLENTLY as Carl grabs the CONTROL STICK and flings them 500ft down a steep sided valley. Victoria SCREAMS as Carl expertly puts the helicopter through a 360' BARREL-ROLL. Josh clings on for dear life as the valley walls flash by.

Carl levels off, thirty feet above a huge river, the engine WHINING in protest. Carl is LAUGHING.

VICTORIA (FURIOUS)
You reckless son of a bitch!

JOSH
That was sweet! Do it again.

INT/EXT. RIVER VALLEY - DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS as the helicopter winds its way down the valley, following the surging river. Victoria tries to engage the recalcitrant Josh in conversation.

VICTORIA
How'd you wind up here, Josh?

JOSH
Court makes me see my Dad twice a year.

CARL
Bit like boot camp.

VICTORIA
What's Frank like? I've heard conflicting reports.

JOSH
Yeah.

CARL
"Conflicting" pretty much sums him up. (beat) Alright, folks. We're here...

Suddenly, the ground falls away. The helicopter drops over the edge of a waterfall that cascades 1000ft into a DOLINE, a vast circular hole in the valley floor. A beautiful rainbow hangs above the waterfall.

The helicopter powers forward toward BASECAMP: a cluster of PORTACABINS and large MACHINERY perched at the far side of the cliff.

Josh suddenly looks sad. He stares down at the base of the waterfall, where the river disappears through a gaping vertical crack in the rock.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
I can feel your hatred...

EXT. SERENITY CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

At the bottom of the cliff, a thick COMMUNICATION CABLE winds its way into the darkness, following the river. BATS and SWALLOWS flit and dart in the dark zone.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
...Taste it...

Every hundred feet or so, a HIGH INTENSITY DISCHARGE (HID) LIGHT has been clipped to the wall, illuminating the tunnel.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
...Breathe it...

INT. SANTO CAVE SYSTEM.

HIGH SPEED as we follow the cable through miles of cave, slowing occasionally at key points. The cable leads us through tight tunnels, air-filled chambers, surging rivers and over powerful waterfalls, rigged with rope bridges.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
...through miles of rock...

Finally, at the end of the tunnel, a dance of light.

INT. FORWARD BASE

The river spills out into a vast chamber, three quarters filled with water. An island rises above the water, illuminated by powerful HID LIGHTS. Forward base looks like an explosion in a dive store: SCUBA EQUIPMENT is littered everywhere: WETSUITS hanging on a line, REBREATHERS and DIVER PROPULSION VEHICLES.

In the center of the island sits a large TENT. The glow from several COMPUTER MONITORS can be seen through the fabric. A FIBER-OPTIC cable leads from the tent toward a DIVE PLATFORM that extends into the water.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
...I hope you never come out.

Australian cave diver FRANK MCGUIRE (early 40's) stands alone in the gin-clear water. He wears a scuffed and worn WETSUIT. Frank exudes a quiet confidence. A man who keeps his own counsel. He's as hard and as cold as the caves he explores.

Frank's eyes are closed in meditation as he rehearses emergency BAIL-OUT DRILLS. He moves with fluid clarity, as if practising Tai-Chi.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Focus on the dive. (beat) High oxygen: close valve, diluent flush, engage manual flight. Good. You ain't dying down there today. Low oxygen...(beat) Shit! Low oxygen.....

Frank SIGHS and opens his eyes.

FRANK
That damn kid.

Frank takes three deep BREATHS, closes his eyes and starts the drills again. VOICES drift over from the far side of the cave.

CRAZY GEORGE (O.S TEXAN DRAWL)
That's the third time you checked that gauge. You sure you're okay?

JUDES (O.S)
Yeah.(beat) Just tired. You know...

Sitting on the edge of the dive platform is CRAZY GEORGE (40's).

George is a tall and wiry Texan who looks like a hippy. He's busy operating the joystick control of a CAVE MAPPING ROV.

JUDY 'JUDES' TREBLE (30's) stands in the water beside him. She is wearing a CLOSED CIRCUIT REBREATHER and CAVE DIVING EQUIPMENT. Judes is a serious-minded diver who likes to do things by the book. She also looks great in a wetsuit.

CRAZY GEORGE
You wanna cancel the dive?

JUDES
No.

CRAZY GEORGE
No one'll blame you, Judes. He's had you in the water seven days straight now. When the hell did you last see daylight?

Judes looks up at George and forces a smile.

JUDES
Three weeks ago.

CRAZY GEORGE (LAUGHING)
Damn, girl. You're starting to look like Gollum.

JUDES (LAUGHING)
Thanks, George.

CRAZY GEORGE
Cave's still gonna be here next year...

JUDES
Try telling Frank that.

CRAZY GEORGE (SERIOUS)
You dive for yourself. Not for Frank. "Anyone can call the dive at any time for..."

JUDES
"...any reason." I know.

CRAZY GEORGE
So. (beat) Why don't you sit this one out?

Judes deliberates. She looks yearningly toward her SLEEPING BAG at the rear of the cave. She looks tempted when...

FRANK
You all set?

FRANK wades toward them, zipping up his suit. His face is set with an intense, determined look. He grabs his REBREATHER from the dive platform and fires up the electronics.

JUDES (FORCED CHEERFULNESS)
Sure...

She looks up at George and squeezes his hand.

JUDES (WHISPERED)
Last time, George. Promise.

George hands Judes her mask.

CRAZY GEORGE
I'm gonna hold you to that.

JUDES (TO FRANK)
(continuing)
Ready as I'll ever be.

FRANK
George, you in position?

On George's LAPTOP, a DIGITAL IMAGE of the cave can be seen, marked DEVIL'S RESTRICTION. Hundreds of BOULDERS stacked high. A gaping TUNNEL beneath them. Frank studies the screen.

CRAZY GEORGE
Hell, yeah. I still say she's teasin' us, Frank. Ain't no way through that restriction.

FRANK
Machines can't feel the cave, George. (TAPS the screen) This one goes. Trust me.

CRAZY GEORGE (WEARILY)
How many times have I heard that?

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! A RED LIGHT flashes above the communication tent. Frank, Judes and George look at one another in concern. Crazy George staggers to his feet and hobbles into the tent to answer the call. He walks with a pronounced LIMP.

JUDES (ANXIOUS)
Rain?

FRANK
No. We're good for a few weeks yet.

George pokes his head out of the tent.

CRAZY GEORGE
It's Carl.

Frank's face registers annoyance.

FRANK (SARCASTIC)
Hallelujah! "Rich Boy" returns.

CRAZY GEORGE
He wants a word with you.

Frank drags himself out of the water.

FRANK
I'll bet he does.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT

Frank slumps down into a chair, surrounded by high tech equipment and several MONITORS. Crazy George hovers in the background. Carl's face can be seen on the DIVE COM. He doesn't look happy.

FRANK
Why are you using the emergency line?

CARL
I want a progress report.

FRANK (ANNOYED)
You got me out of the water for that?

INT. BASECAMP OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A bank of high tech electronics, including several MONITORS. Frank's face fills the screen. Carl SLAMS the table.

CARL (ANGRY)
Goddamn it, Frank! We're running out of time...

FRANK (V.O.)
Alright, I'll give you a progress report: we're down here, busting our balls, while you fuck off to pick up your girlfriend.

Victoria, Josh and the basecamp manager, JIM SERGEANT (36) hover in the background next to an enormous CAVE MAP. Jim and Josh exchange a look: this is typical Frank.

CARL
Four months, Frank. I could have dug myself a bigger cave by now.

FRANK
Yeah, well. This cave don't follow your schedule. Put my son on the line.

Victoria flashes Josh a sympathetic look. Josh SIGHS heavily.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT

Carl casts a final murderous glance at Frank before he disappears off screen. George shakes his head wearily.

CRAZY GEORGE (TO FRANK)
Nice. Keep on biting the hand that feeds us...

FRANK
We earned the right to dive here, George. If that softcock wants a piece of this cave, he should try getting his hands dirty.

On screen, Josh slouches into the chair and stares sullenly.

JOSH (HOSTILE)
(long beat) What?

FRANK
You're on my shitlist, mate.

JOSH
Whatever.

FRANK
You were assigned rope man. You're supposed to be working here as part of the team, not off on some joy ride.

Josh stares at his feet and snorts derisively: it's pretty obvious he thinks his old man is a total dick.

FRANK (FURIOUS)
Did you hear what I said!?!

Josh reaches forward and defiantly flicks a switch. The screen suddenly goes blank. Frank stares in disbelief. Crazy George tries hard not to laugh.

INT/EXT. BASECAMP OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Josh storms out, furious and humiliated. Victoria follows him a few seconds later. She finds Josh around the back of the office, KICKING the wall. Josh slumps to the floor, head down and BREATHING hard.

Victoria places her hand on his shoulder. He gazes up at her, grateful for the attention. His eyes drift across her body. Victoria catches him checking her out. An awkward moment.

INT. FORWARD BASE

Frank storms down to the water, Crazy George limping after him.

CRAZY
Go easy on him, Frank. The kid deserved a break.

Frank wades into the water and starts kitting up.

FRANK
We're all tuckered out. That don't mean he can sneak off whenever he feels like it.

Frank SPITS into his mask and winks at Judes.

FRANK
Ready to rock?

JUDES (FORCED ENTHUSIASM)
First one to the tunnel "bags the booty".

FRANK
In your dreams.

JUDES (SIGHS)
Let's hope this is the one.

FRANK
This is the one. Trust me.

JUDES
(beat) Then let's do it.

They insert their mouthpieces, then grasp hands as a gesture of "goodluck". Venting their WINGS, they sink beneath the surface.

EXT. DECO HABITAT

The divers descend toward an UNDERWATER DECOMPRESSION HABITAT, bolted to the walls at a depth of 30 ft. Each diver's REBREATHER has their name boldly stencilled across the back.

CLOSE-UP of Frank's eyes behind his mask as he moves through the water. His voice sounds tense and strained.

FRANK
Focus. Forget the kid. This cave'll kill you in a heartbeat if you let it.(beat) The cave always wins.

The DECO HAB looks like a high-tech lunar landing module. DIVER PROPULSION VEHICLES (DPV's) and STAGE CYLINDERS have been clipped to a DECO LINE that descends into the inky depths. The DPV's look like miniature torpedoes, fitted with handlebars. The divers collect their DPV's, clip on their STAGE CYLINDERS and power away into the inky depths.

INT. SUMP ONE

VRRRRR! Powerful HID lights from the DPV's flit across the walls of an enormous underwater cavern. Frank follows a thin GUIDELINE that snakes its way across the calcite-covered ceiling. The water is crystal clear: visibility a hundred feet or more. The REBREATHER'S lack of bubbles give the divers the appearance of astronauts, exploring inner space.

Frank's voice begins to relax, becoming deep and reverent as he recites Coleridge's famous poem.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan.
A stately pleasure dome decree.
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran.
Through caverns measureless to man.
Down to a sunless sea.

They enter a room, where white FLOWSTONE covers the walls. It's like a waterfall frozen in time. Stunningly beautiful. Frank gazes in wonder as they pass amazing SPELEOTHEMS, connecting the floor to the ceiling.

INT. DEEP TUNNEL.

Frank and Judes power their DPV's into a long winding tunnel.

POV FRANK: the HEADS UP DISPLAY (HUD) clipped onto his REBREATHER MOUTHPIECE bathes his face a ghoulish green glow.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
70 meters...80...90...

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! A red light flashes across Frank's face as his REBREATHER HUD ALARM sounds.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Oxygen spike. Add some helium.

PFFT! Frank calmly reaches down and pushes a button on his COUNTERLUNGS. The HUD turns green again.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
No worries. Where's Judes?

VRRRR! Judes overtakes Frank, aiming her DPV toward a narrow gap in the tunnel. CRUNCH! Her REBREATHER clumsily scrapes against the rock, bringing down a cloud of fine silt.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(continuing)
C'mon, Judy-babe. Tighten it up.

Frank's eyes narrow in concentration as he follows her into the tunnel. The whirling blades of his DPV PROPELLER slowly DISSOLVE INTO...

EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

THUDDA! THUDDA! THUDDA! The whirling rotor blades of a RUSSIAN KAMOV HELICOPTER as it hovers above basecamp. Operations manager, Jim Sergeant is marching across camp, trying to outpace Carl. Jim used to be a Royal Navy diver. Right now, he wishes he was back defusing mines.

CARL
Do you think it's worth me kitting up and going down there?

Basecamp is a hive of activity: LOCAL VILLAGERS unloading OXYGEN CYLINDERS from a huge CRANE at the edge of the doline. ENGINEERS inspecting an ELECTRICAL GENERATOR. BLENDING TECHNICIANS operating two large COMPRESSORS.

JIM
I doubt it. You want my opinion, Frank's lost the fucking plot.

The KAMOV touches down, creating a huge cloud of dust. Jim approaches one of the local villagers who is supervising the unloading of OXYGEN CYLINDERS from the CRANE.

Luko (24) speaks in a heavily accented PIDGIN ENGLISH. We catch maybe two words in three. He's a large, powerful man. Respected among his tribe and feared as a fierce warrior. Luko has a BEECH NUT CIGARETTE permanently glued to his bottom lip.

LUKO (PIDGIN ENGLISH)
Numato! Tamairi! Yu-two fala ee kam long ples yia mo helpem me-fala. Mix master blong Jesus Christ!

Two more VILLAGERS rush over and start loading empty CYLINDERS onto the KAMOV HELICOPTER. Jim removes the cigarette from Luko's lips and crushes it out, nodding toward the FLAMMABLE STICKER on the OXYGEN CYLINDER.

JIM (FLUENT PIDGIN)
Buy yu sackem-out cigarette blong you, eh? All tank yia ee save boom! Killem all dead.

Jim marches over to the basecamp office, Carl doggedly following him.

CARL
"Mix master blong Jesus Christ?"

JIM
He means the helicopter.

Josh suddenly bursts out of the office doorway, with Victoria in tow. They are both rigged in CLIMBING HARNESSES. Jim grabs Josh in a friendly HEADLOCK on the bottom step.

JIM
Back in the doghouse, mate! Right where you belong.

JOSH
Surprised he even noticed I'd gone.

JIM
Oh, he noticed alright. Took him a full day to get down there without you.

JOSH (LAUGHING)
Must've been painful to watch.

JIM
Yeah, well. Don't look so chuffed. He's put you on double rope duty for the rest of the week. Starting now.

Josh SIGHS heavily. Victoria places her hand on his shoulder.

VICTORIA (DISAPPOINTED)
Josh was going to teach me how to rappel...

JIM (TO JOSH)
(long beat) Go on. I haven't seen you.

JOSH
Yesss!

VICTORIA
(she winks at Carl) You gonna come and hold my hand?

CARL
Not now!

VICTORIA
Suit yourself. You have two-hundred emails waiting for you in there...

CARL
They can all fuck off.

JIM
You should go with them, Carl. Try and enjoy the last few days. I'll let you know if Frank finds anything.

Jim disappears inside the office. TIGHT on Carl. He doesn't look happy at all.

INT. BASECAMP OFFICE

Jim switches on the DIVE COM and gazes at the ROV MONITOR.

JIM
Where are they, George?

CRAZY GEORGE (V.O.)
Devil's restriction.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATION TENT

Crazy George reaches forward and sharpens the digital image from the ROV. The fuzzy picture shows Frank and Judes arriving at the restriction.

CRAZY GEORGE(FLICKING A SWITCH)
And...let there be light.

INT. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION

WHOOMPH! Several HID lights fire up on the ROV, illuminating the cave as far as the eye can see. Thousands of BOULDERS cover the floor. The boulders have been ground smooth so they resemble a pile of gigantic marbles.

Judes 'parks' her DPV beneath a natural bridge in the boulders. A gaping black hole leading into the unknown. Her DPV PROPELLER stirs up a cloud of SILT.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT

On the monitor, the image is obscured by silt. Crazy George grabs the joystick and powers the ROV upwards.

CRAZY GEORGE
Ah, shit. Call the scuba police.
Amateur alert!

INT. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

The thick cloud of silt engulfs Judes and Frank, reducing visibility to zero.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Deep and slow. Panic kills. Clip on a reel.

POV FRANK: we can barely see his hands as he expertly attaches a SAFETY GUIDELINE to a rock in front of him.

FRANK
Now rise above the situation.

PFTTT! Frank adds gas to his WING. LINE rattles off his REEL.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT.

On screen, the ROV hovers patiently above the cloud of silt. George breathes a SIGH of relief as he watches Frank rising like a ghost, back into clear water.

INT. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

Frank can see Judes light in the cloud beneath him.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
She's gonna be pissed about that. Alright, Frank: focus. Master controller: P-oh-two: fine. Slave: Fine.
(PFT! The solenoid fires)
There's your second heartbeat.
(glances at wrist computer)
Depth 98 meters. Run time's good...

Frank's eyes suddenly widen. He notices the silt cloud is being sucked into a hole in the boulders, thirty feet away.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(continuing)
Shit! That's the way through!

The cloud of silt continues drifting toward the hole.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(continuing)
Oh man, that is strong flow!
(gazing around the cave)
Got you! Finally!
(irritated)
C'mon Judes, sort your shit out.

Judes sheepishly drifts toward him and flashes an 'okay' signal. She shakes her head, obviously annoyed with herself.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(continuing)
Yeah, drinks are on you tonight.

Frank flashes his light toward the new lead. They swim over to investigate.

INT. FORWARD BASE PLATFORM.

Crazy George powers the ROV forward, illuminating Frank and Judes as they follow the silt toward the hole.

CRAZY GEORGE (WARY)
Frank, what you doin', Frank?

The DIVE COM crackles.

JIM (V.O.)
What the fuck is he up to?

CRAZY GEORGE
He's smelled somethin'.

The ROV focusses on a narrow tunnel winding its way into the bowels of the earth. It's a claustrophobic nightmare.

CRAZY GEORGE (WHISPERS)
Oh, Christ, Frank. Leave it.

INT. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

Frank tries squeezing into he tunnel, but the entrance is too small. Judes watches apprehensively as Frank removes his REBREATHER. He reaches forward and scribbles a message onto her WRIST SLATE.

Judes gazes down at Frank's message: "SHE GOES. TRUST ME!"

Holding his rebreather in front of him, Frank pushes into the tight hole.

EXT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE - DAY

VICTORIA
Why should I trust you?

JOSH (SHRUGS)
I'm the only one around here who
can climb for shit.

Victoria peers nervously over the edge of the doline. Josh is clipping her onto a rope that disappears over the 1000ft drop.

Victoria casts a weary look toward Carl. He is pacing along the edge of the cliff, a SATELLITE PHONE glued to his ear.

VICTORIA
Carl! Are we doing this or what?

Carl lifts his hand, irritated. Victoria rolls her eyes at Josh.

VICTORIA
(continuing)
I swear they'd still manage to find him on the moon!

Carl paces over and thrusts the phone into Victoria's hand.

CARL
Deal with them will you? Tell them I'm uncontactable until further notice.

Victoria throws the phone far over the edge of the cliff.

VICTORIA (SMILING SWEETLY)
Dealt with.

Carl looks suitably shocked.

JOSH (LAUGHING)
Sweet!

CARL (CURT)
I'll get my harness.

Victoria inches her way to the edge of the precipice and braces herself, ready to rappel down. Carl starts pulling items of CLIMBING EQUIPMENT out of a FLIGHT CASE.

CARL (SMILING)
Keep an eye on her, Josh. She's terrified of heights!

Victoria flashes Carl a knowing look. There's clearly something going on.

JOSH (TO VICTORIA)
No worries. Take it nice and easy, like I showed you.

VICTORIA (NERVOUS)
You won't let me fall?

Victoria squeezes his hand. Josh BLUSHES.

JOSH
Promise. Clear below!

EXPEDITION MEMBER (DISTANT O.S)
Climb when ready!

VICTORIA (CONFIDENT)
Climbing!

With a wink and a smile, Victoria suddenly throws herself backwards over the edge.

ZZZZIP! Josh gazes in open jawed amazement as Victoria expertly completes the rappel in three bounces.

CARL
You can't beat a woman who's into ropes.

Josh looks gobsmacked.

CARL (SMILING)
She's ex-professional. We met during the Everest expedition.

JOSH
Wow. That must have been awesome.

CARL
Piece of piss after K2.

Carl adjusts his climbing harness.

CARL
Life's not a dress-rehearsal, Josh. Sometimes you have to seize the day.

Carl CLIPS himself onto the rope.

CARL
Fifty bucks says I reach the bottom before you.

Josh GRINS, inverts himself and leaps off the edge of the cliff. ZZZZZZIP! Josh RUNS down the vertical cliff wall for 600 feet before applying the brake. He glances back up the cliff. Carl is nowhere in sight.

JOSH
Loser!

BOING! Josh bounces out into space, spinning in the sunlight and emitting a WHOOP of delight. BADOOSH! He swings into the glittering WATERFALL. The cascade shatters into a million droplets as the force of the water spins him around and around.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
No one can take this away! This is mine! I own it!

Josh gazes down at the cave entrance and SHOUTS at the top of his lungs.

JOSH (YELLING)
FUCK YOU!

INT. BODY TUBE - DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

Inside the claustrophobic tunnel, things are getting tight. Frank's face is contorted with the physical effort of pushing his REBREATHER ahead of him. His breathing rate increases, each BREATH sounds deafening inside the enclosed space.

Suddenly, he wedges stuck. His HOSES and VALVES scrape against the sharp rock. Frank gazes nervously behind him.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT.

On the screen, Judes is still outside the tunnel, unclipping her STAGE BOTTLES. Crazy George paces in front of the monitor, clearly agitated.

CRAZY GEORGE (ON DIVECOM)
Plan the dive and dive the plan,
D'you recall hearing that
somewhere?

INT/EXT. BASECAMP OFFICE - DAY

Jim has been joined by several EXPEDITION MEMBERS. They crowd around the monitor, eagerly watching the image.

CRAZY GEORGE (V.O.)
...But, no. Our boy's gotta go find himself a hole tighter than a nun's nasty...

LAUGHTER from the team. This is the most excitement they've had in months. They watch Judes squeezing her way into the tunnel.

EXPEDITION MEMBER #1
100 meters with no bailout. That is hardcore, man.

CRAZY GEORGE (V.O.)
I'm goin' after them...

The team watch the ROV power forward, BUMPING and GRINDING it's way down the tunnel. BRRRR! BRRRR! A SATELLITE PHONE rings in the background. Jim snatches it up.

JIM
Hello? (SIGHS heavily)

EXT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE

Carl stands in the middle of the clearing, adjusting a complicated-looking HARNESS clipped to his chest. The BASECAMP OFFICE DOOR flies open.

JIM (HOLDING THE PHONE)
Carl! For you. Again.

Carl suddenly turns and races toward the edge of the cliff.

CARL
Tell them to...fuck...off!

Carl LEAPS into the doline.

CUT TO:

Josh is half-way down the cliff face when he hears an almighty SHRIEK from above. He looks up to see Carl falling toward him. Josh instinctively hugs the cliff wall.

JOSH
Below!

CUT TO:

The EXPEDITION TEAM scatter and drop as Carl falls toward them. Victoria gazes up, open jawed.

VICTORIA
Oh, Christ!

CUT TO:

Carl hurtles past Josh in a blur. WHOOMPTH! His BASE JUMPING PARACHUTE deploys at 200ft.

CARL
Yeee-ha!

Carl steers the CHUTE expertly down toward the clearing. The expedition team gaze up in shocked amazement. Luko has never seen a parachute before. Victoria's face is a mask of anger.

VICTORIA (BELLOWING)
Carl! You reckless son of a bitch!

INT. BODY TUBE. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION

Frank is still wedged stuck in the narrow tunnel. Flakes of rock dance around him. He's now PANTING in exertion.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Deep and slow. Panic's a vulture,
sat on your shoulder, waiting.
There's always slack somewhere,
Frank. Try backing up.

CUT TO:

Further back in the tunnel, Judes can see Frank backing out toward her. As she tries to turn around, one of her BREATHING HOSES gets snagged on a sharp outcrop of rock. Judes WRENCHES it free, bringing down flakes of rock and silt.

CUT TO:

Frank starts CHANTING, mantra style as he edges his way forward again.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
In Xanadu...did Kubla Khan...A
stately pleasure dome...decree...

Ahead of him, the tunnel opens up into a gaping black void.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Christ, would you look at that.
It's wide open!

INT. UNEXPLORED ABYSS

Frank pulls himself out of a crack in an underwater cliff and re-dons his rebreather.

Sudden vertigo as his torch reveals a gaping black abyss, no sign of the walls or ceiling. Below him, the cave plummets to infinity.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Yes! Yes! This is what it's all about! No-one has ever seen this. No one! Here. Now. This is who you are, Frank Mcguire!

A flash of light behind him. Judes pulls herself out of the tunnel, her eyes wide with excitement. She shakes a fragment of rock from her REBREATHER and puts it back on.

VRRRRRR! The ROV pops out of the tunnel, filling the chamber with light. The cave is monstrous. The ROV's lights just manage to paint the far walls. Frank and Judes hang in the abyss, like two fireflies inside a cathedral.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATION TENT.

Crazy George can't drag his eyes away from the screen.

CRAZY GEORGE (AWE-INSPIRED WHISPER)
Jim, tell me y'all getting this?

INT. BASECAMP OFFICE - DAY

Jim and the team members stare at the monitor in hushed amazement.

JIM
Yeah. It's amazing.(beat) Somebody better fetch Carl.

Nobody moves.

CRAZY GEORGE (V.O.)
That stubborn son of a bitch. He finally did it.

INT. UNEXPLORED ABYSS

Frank and Judes hover in the abyss, gazing in awestruck wonder at the new cave.

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(continuing)
Heh! Judy-babe, we have scored big time. This place is...

Frank's eyes suddenly narrow in concern. BUBBLES are streaming from Judes REBREATHER. Frank swims over to her.

Frank signals she has a small leak. Judes looks confused. She spins around so Frank can take a closer look. Frank notices a small tear in the BREATHING HOSE, where it attaches to the COUNTERLUNGS. Frank reaches forward to examine the hose.

BADOOSH! The hose suddenly pops free from the REBREATHER.

Bubbles EXPLODE as Judes ALARM starts to scream. Red light bathes the cave.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! Judes starts to sink. She signals to Frank, still relatively calm: "out of air".

Frank duck-dives down to her. He removes his own mouthpiece and offers it. Judes gulps down several BREATHS. They are sinking fast, Judes struggling to locate her WING INFLATOR.

PFFFT! Frank starts pumping air into his WING to arrest their descent. BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! His REBREATHER HUD ALARM flashes red as his oxygen spikes. Judes now looks really scared.

By now, Frank is desperate to breathe himself. He gently pulls the mouthpiece away from Judes. She's reluctant to let it go. Frank pulls harder.

BLAM! Judes is suddenly all over Frank in a frenzy, a look of blind panic on her face. She claws at Frank's face, ripping off his mask.

POV Frank: A blurred red nightmare as Judes attacks him. Frank backs away, struggling to restrain her. Her attack grows weaker and weaker until...

BLOOMPTH! A final exhalation of bubbles as she finally takes water into her lungs. Frank releases her and pulls out his back-up mask.

POV Frank: his vision clears as he empties the mask of water. Frank watches Judes spiral down into the darkness. Her light eventually disappears.

INT. FORWARD BASE COMMUNICATIONS TENT.

Crazy George gazes at the screen in horror. Frank turns and looks directly at the ROV CAMERA.

CRAZY GEORGE (WHISPER)
Oh, sweet Jesus, no...

INT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE

EXCITED CHATTER as Carl, Josh, Victoria and Luko travel up in the METAL CAGE attached to the CRANE. Carl is showing Josh the BASE JUMP HARNESS. The cage clears the edge of the cliff.

Jim stands waiting for them, looking white as a sheet. Other expedition members stand in utter shock. Some of them are CRYING. In an instant, all the color drains from Josh's face.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
He's dead. I wished it. It's my fault. I killed him.

Jim steps forward and places his hand on Josh's shoulder.

JIM
Your Dad's fine.

TIGHT on Josh: unable to disguise his relief.

Jim casts an angry glance at Carl, who stands holding his BASE JUMP CHUTE.

JIM (DISDAIN)
They just broke this cave for you, Hurley.(beat) Judes didn't make it.

TIGHT on Carl as he takes this in.

INT. UNDERWATER DECO HABITAT - 8 HOURS LATER.

A small bell-shaped structure, large enough to accommodate four divers. Frank dozes on a bunk with a regulator in his mouth. His REBREATHER is tethered in the MOONPOOL. George reaches over and nudges Frank awake.

CRAZY GEORGE
Off o2.

Frank sits up.

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
How you doin'?

Frank GROANS and buries his head in his hands.

CRAZY GEORGE
104 subtract 7.

FRANK
Christ, George, give me a break...

CRAZY GEORGE
Start callin' the numbers.

FRANK (WEARY)
97...90.....83.....76...

CRAZY GEORGE
Alright. I reckon you're clear.
(long beat)
Jesus, Frank. What happened?

FRANK
Breathing hose. Ripped clean out of her counterlung. She must've loosened it going through the tunnel.

CRAZY GEORGE
Or maybe she was too tired to check it before the dive?

FRANK
You think I killed her?

CRAZY GEORGE
Down here, it's all about knowing when to quit. You taught me that.

Frank considers this.

FRANK
I should go back for her.

CRAZY GEORGE
Ain't no way you're draggin' a body back through that restriction.
(beat)
No. This is how she wanted it. Hell, she even used to joke: "you can't get buried...

FRANK
"...deeper for cheaper"

Frank and George smile sadly. A long pause.

CRAZY GEORGE
C'mon. Let's get you out of here.

EXT. KASTOM VILLAGE - NIGHT

A huge bonfire in the center of the village. DRUMS beat a solemn rhythm as the LOCAL SHAMAN leads a dozen VILLAGERS in a DEATH RITE around the fire. Their painted bodies glisten in the firelight. Other VILLAGERS watch from the shadows. Scattered among them are several EXPEDITION MEMBERS, looking utterly defeated. A couple of them are still crying.

Josh, Carl and Victoria sit inside an open hut. Luko sits with them, preparing coconut shells of KAVA. He chews on the root from a pepper plant and SPITS the intoxicating residue into the shells.

CARL (TO JOSH)
...until you've experienced it, you'll never understand! Any fool can climb a mountain. Who knows where this cave leads?

JOSH (ANGRY)
Who fucking cares? Death toll's up to three now...

VICTORIA (TO CARL)
You never told me that.

CARL
Ten years ago, two divers stumbled across this system. Real experienced, I mean, they'd been pushing caves for thirty years...

VICTORIA
What happened?

CARL
No-one knows. Their equipment was washed up twenty miles away. In the ocean.

JOSH
Who...fucking...cares?

CARL
It's a tired old world, Josh. Where else do you get to shine a light where no man has been before?

JOSH
You wanna see something no-one's seen before?

Josh picks up a COCONUT SHELL and rolls it to Carl.

JOSH
Crack that open.

CARL (SCATHING)
You just don't get it, do you? You carry on climbing your mountains 'because they're there'.
(beat)
We're doing it because it's NOT there.

JOSH
And that's worth dying for is it?

CARL
Judes thought so.

A moment as they consider this.

VICTORIA (TO CARL)
You think Frank'll cancel the expedition?

CARL
He can't. He needs it.(beat) More than any of us.

Luko SPITS into the shell and offers them the kava.

CARL (DISGUSTED)
He expects us to drink that?

JOSH
Kava. To honor Judes.

Josh takes the shell and gulps down the intoxicating brew. Carl watches in horror as Victoria reaches for the shell. She shrugs at Carl.

VICTORIA
I've swallowed worse.

Victoria downs it in one.

VICTORIA
Wow! I can feel my lips going numb already.

Carl reaches forward and nervously takes the shell.

JOSH
Just do it.

Carl sips it, gingerly, holding his nose as he does so. Victoria takes perverse satisfaction in watching his discomfort. Carl GAGS and races out into the bushes.

VICTORIA
(continuing)
Lightweight.

Victoria staggers to her feet and follows Carl.

VICTORIA
(continuing)
Oh man! That shit is really good.

Suddenly, the DRUMS stop beating. Silence descends upon the village. Josh's intoxicated mind reels from the kava as he turns to see:

Frank, stepping out of the shadows, looking utterly exhausted. He is caked in mud and looks like a primordial nightmare. George appears behind him. The villagers WHISPER nervously as they watch Frank approach the expedition members. Jim steps forward and offers his condolences. Other team members walk away in disgust. Josh closes his eyes.

A shadow falls across Josh's face. He looks up to see Frank standing above him. Josh tenses as Frank sits next to him. A long awkward silence. The drums continue their mournful heartbeat, building in intensity over the following:

JOSH (FINALLY)
Look. If you're gonna bollock me, just get it over with.

FRANK
You wanna quit drinking that shit. Makes you sound dopier than you really are.

JOSH
You should try it.
(under his breath)
God knows you need it.

FRANK
You enjoy showing off for your new mates?

JOSH
Least I got mates.

FRANK
I told you to stay away from Carl. He collects people.
(beat)
Uses them.

Josh finally turns and looks at his father.

JOSH
He reckons you're going back in.
(beat)
Says that's what Judes would have wanted.

Frank SNORTS derisively.

FRANK
That's what Carl wants.

JOSH
And you don't?

Frank looks at him.

FRANK
You dive caves for long enough, this kind of thing happens. Judes knew the risks, better than anyone.

JOSH (MUMBLING)
She knew how much <u>you</u> wanted this.

FRANK
What's that supposed to mean?

JOSH
Nothin'.

FRANK
Look, nobody forced Judes to do anything!

JOSH
Whatever.

FRANK
You're full of shit, mate. You haven't a fucking clue what you're talking about. You been hanging around with the yuppie too long.

JOSH (BRISTLING)
Least he treats me like an adult.

FRANK
Yeah? Well. Soon as you start acting like an adult, I'll consider treating you like one...

JOSH (SUDDENLY ANGRY)
You know what? Why don't you just...

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
(screaming)
FUCK OFF!FUCK OFF!FUCK OFF!

The drums suddenly stop dead.

JOSH (A WEARY WHISPER)
...Leave me alone.

Frank gets up and walks away. Josh watches him disappear.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
I will never be like you. Never.

INT. JUDES'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

Frank opens the flap to Judes' tent and steps inside. His torch reveals a clutter of SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT and DIVE GEAR. Frank empties Judes's rucksack. He picks up her ADDRESS BOOK and starts searching for a number. A photograph falls out: Judes with her HUSBAND and BABY. Frank stares at the picture.

EXT. JUDES'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

The silhouette of Frank: his shoulders ROCKING in grief.

EXT. JUNGLE AT EDGE OF DOLINE - NIGHT

Carl is doubled up in the bushes, DRY RETCHING from the kava. Victoria stands over him, rubbing his shoulders.

VICTORIA
Shhh! Listen!

A distant CHANTING, carried on the wind. Curious, she staggers to the edge of the clearing to investigate.

CARL (MOANING)
Please, baby. D-don't leave me!

VICTORIA
Quit whining.

Victoria stumbles her way through the thick jungle. She's still pretty intoxicated from the kava. An owl SHRIEKS, startling her. She listens again. Silence. Then a twig SNAPS.

VICTORIA
Who's there?

The CHANTING starts again. Victoria nervously pushes forward. She emerges into a clearing at the edge of the doline.

At the edge of the doline, the KASTOM SHAMAN is surrounded by several villagers performing an ancient PURIFICATION RITE. The Shaman's grotesque DEATH MASK glints in the moonlight as he incants a solemn PRAYER. Victoria turns to leave.

BLAM! Luko suddenly looms over her, swaying in a kava-induced trance. He doesn't seem to recognize her. Victoria GASPS in fright. After a few seconds, Luko staggers past her toward the ceremony.

Josh steps out of the shadows, grabs Victoria's hand and pulls her back into the jungle.

VICTORIA (HUSHED WHISPER)
Jesus! You scared me to death...

JOSH
Sssh! You're not supposed to be here!

VICTORIA
What are they doing?

JOSH
Judes death really freaked them out. They're trying to appease the cave spirits.

VICTORIA
Cave spirits?

JOSH
The ones that took Judes soul.

Victoria watches the Shaman lift some BURNING EMBERS high above his head. The villagers WHISPER to each other as the PRAYER continues. Some of them look really frightened.

VICTORIA
What is he saying?

JOSH
He's warning them to stay out of the cave.

The SHAMAN launches the burning embers over the cliff.

SHAMAN (PIDGIN ENGLISH)
All man whair oh-lee gat straight heart mo oh-lee gat gud tinktink ee sa-vay go inside long taboo...

JOSH (TRANSLATING)
"Only those...pure of spirit...can enter and survive".

The embers flare for a few seconds and then are gone.

EXT. BASECAMP OFFICE - NIGHT

FRANK walks back toward the basecamp office, with Judes ADDRESS BOOK. He's about to open the door when he hears RAISED VOICES from inside.

POV Frank: Through the window, he sees Jim, Crazy George and the expedition team huddled around the monitor. They're watching ROV footage from Judes death.

EXPEDITION MEMBER (O.S.)
...he had no fucking right taking her through that restriction without bailout! It was an accident waiting to happen...

INT. BASECAMP CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Frank opens the door. Everyone falls silent.

FRANK
(long beat) Excuse me. I've a phone call to make.

The team start to filter out. Many of them won't look at Frank. Jim and Crazy George pause on their way out the door.

CRAZY GEORGE
I've downloaded the data from the ROV.

Frank nods grimly.

JIM
You should take a look at it, Frank. Before you make your decision.

They leave. Frank slumps down into the chair, staring at the phone. He glances at the MONITOR marked CAVE MAPPER. Frank can't help himself. He powers it up and gazes in disbelief as a 3-D DIGITAL IMAGE of the cave scrolls across the screen.

The new section is massive: a huge air-filled chamber disappears into the unknown, the way forward marked with a QUESTION MARK.

A NOISE behind him. Frank spins around. Carl stands gazing at the screen. He's still looking green from the kava.

CARL
There's a rumor around camp that you're pulling the plug. I want to know if it's true.(beat) What happened today was a tragedy, Frank. But Columbus lost half his crew pushing the unknown...

FRANK (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Imposter. Drunk on opiates from a shallow world. Chasing dreams of immortality. (beat) You've sold your soul. Now deal with it.

CARL
...We value life differently now. It's become too damn important. You think Judes died with regret? Hell, no. She died chasing her dream.

CARL
...I don't think she would forgive us if we quit now.

FRANK (EXPLODING)
Don't tell me what Judes would think! You didn't see her die. You weren't even there!

CARL (EXPLODING)
I fucking paid to be there! Don't forget that!

FRANK (SNARLING)
Don't you worry, Hurley. When I make my decision, I'll let you know.

An awkward pause. Carl suddenly turns on the charm.

CARL
Don't get me wrong, Frank. What you've achieved here is remarkable.

He studies the new cave on the ROV MONITOR.

CARL (REVERENT WHISPER)
She's the mother of all caves. No one's ever broke her. Until now.

Carl turns to Frank with a gleam in his eye. He TAPS his finger against the question mark on the screen.

CARL
Put my name on a piece of this, Frank. And I'll die a happy man.

Carl leaves. Frank continues staring at the frozen image of the cave. Huge. Inviting. Irresistible.

EXT. RAINFOREST - DAY

VARIOUS ESTABLISHING SHOTS as the sun edges its way over the rainforest. Mist rising from the doline. Parrots preening their plumage. Chickens and pigs in the kastom village.

EXT. KASTOM VILLAGE - DAY

Embers from the dying fire rise slowly in the pre-dawn air. Josh lies fast asleep outside Luko's hut. He's still fully clothed from the night before. A BOOT rudely KICKS him awake. Josh's eyes fly open. Frank stands looking down at him.

FRANK
Get up. I want everyone assembled in twenty minutes.

Frank marches off. Josh gazes after him, still hungover.

INT. BASECAMP CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Frank and George are huddled around the computer. Frank TAPS his fingers absently along to an AC-DC TUNE that's playing in the background. He's studying a SATELLITE IMAGE of a STORM.

CRAZY GEORGE
I reckon you got three days.

FRANK
If she changes direction, Jim can give us a shout on the blower.
(MORE)

FRANK (cont'd)
She'll hit the backside of the mountain first. That'll give us eight hours before the river starts to flood. Plenty of time to leg it back up.

CRAZY GEORGE
I can help you get Carl and Victoria down to Forward Base.

FRANK
Cheers, George. We'll take the yuppie for a quick paddle around "the great unknown". Let him name his fucking rock so we can all get the hell out of here.

Jim walks in, Josh trailing behind him.

FRANK (TO JIM)
Is everyone ready?

JIM (SHAKING HIS HEAD)
Luko's men are too spooked to go back in.

FRANK
(beat) We can manage without them. What about the others?

JIM
Sorry, Frank. They don't want anything to do with this.

Frank considers this.

FRANK
They're scared.

JOSH (ANGRY)
Of course they're scared! Aren't you?

Crazy George and Jim exchange a look. They decide to leave.

FRANK (TO JOSH)
Yes, I am. Every time.

Josh looks surprised.

FRANK
The day you ain't scared before a dive is the day you stop diving.

JOSH
It's a sphincter of fucking rock!
You think that's worth dying for?

FRANK
Stop being a drama queen.

Frank heads toward the door. Josh blocks his path.

FRANK
Step aside, Josh!

A moment of tension between them. Josh eventually allows Frank to pass. Frank marches outside.

TIGHT on Josh: a worried expression on his face. He glances at the CAVE MAP on the wall. Frank has already pencilled in the section where Judes died. The new cavern is marked 'Judes Jewel'. The final strains of the AC-DC SONG drift from Frank's old CASETTE PLAYER.

AC-DC (V.O.)
"I'm on a highway to hell..."

EXT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE - DAY

A loud ARGUMENT rages between several VILLAGERS, including Luko. MACHETES have been drawn and tempers flare.

Frank, Crazy George, Carl and Victoria watch the argument from the edge of the doline. They are kitted up and ready to rappel. Frank looks up to find Josh standing there, wearing his waterproofs and climbing harness.

FRANK
What are you doing?

JOSH (SULLEN)
What you said. You need a rope man.

FRANK
You made your position clear. We don't need your help.

CARL
Jesus, Frank. Give the kid a break...

Frank flashes Carl a murderous look.

FRANK (MENACING GROWL)
I suggest you stay the fuck out of this.
(to Josh)
The chopper leaves at ten o'clock. Give my regards to your mother.

Josh stares at his father. Bristling in pure hatred. Then turns and marches away.

VICTORIA
Josh...

Frank shoulders his pack and threads his FIVE BAR RACK into the descent rope.

FRANK
Let's go.

VICTORIA
Frank, stop.
(beat)
If he leaves now, you'll never see him again.

Frank ignores her and leans back over the edge of the cliff.

VICTORIA
(continuing)
I'm going back for him. Okay?

A long pause.

VICTORIA
(continuing)
Okay?

Frank looks up at Victoria. Then nods his head, imperceptibly.

ZIIIIP! Frank disappears over the edge of the cliff.

VICTORIA
Jesus. It's a wonder the boy's not in therapy.

EXT. BASECAMP

Victoria chases after Josh. She sees him storm away into the jungle.

VICTORIA
Josh! Josh, come back!

But Josh has gone.

INT/EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

The river CASCADES into the cave across a series of treacherous rocks, breached by a rickety ROPE BRIDGE. Mist fills the air.

VARIOUS SHOTS as the team enter the cave:

Luko waits for them by the entrance. He MUMBLES a quiet PRAYER as he scoops RED MUD from a shell and paints each team member's face.

Crazy George accepts the ritual solemnly.

Carl follows. He can't take the ritual seriously.

CARL (TO VICTORIA)
I guess they do this for all the tourists?

Victoria next. As Luko paints her face, she glances nervously up at the blue sky framing the entrance to the cave. Acutely aware this might be the last time she sees it.

Frank brings up the rear. He gazes reverently around the cave as Luko performs the ritual. He is about to step into the shadows when he notices a TINY FIGURE perched on the edge of the doline.

EXT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE

Josh sits dejected on the edge of the cliff, watching Frank. A moment passes between them. Then Frank steps into the darkness. Josh closes his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT/EXT. JOSH'S TENT - NIGHT

Josh lies in his sleeping bag, fast asleep. The distant rumble of THUNDER jolts him awake. Josh sits up. A dull ROAR can be heard, like a far-away train. He sticks his head out of the tent.

Josh's eyes widen in alarm: the sky CRACKLES as a fierce ELECTRICAL STORM rages on the horizon. Josh staggers out toward the lights of the basecamp office.

INT/EXT. BASECAMP OFFICE

As Josh approaches the office, it's clear that something is very wrong. The remaining team members are crowded anxiously around the open doorway, whispering nervously to each other. RAISED VOICES can be heard coming from within. Jim is shouting into the DIVE COM.

JIM (O.S.)
Forward Base, forward base, this is basecamp, over. Do you read? Christ, Frank pick up!

Josh peers in through the window. The team are huddled around the MONITOR watching a satellite image of the approaching STORM. Everyone looks really scared.

EXPEDITION MEMBER # 1
I'm telling you, the comms are down!

JIM
There's plenty of signal. Just no one's answering.

EXPEDITION MEMBER # 2
Send someone down, for Christ's sake! Before it's too late!

JIM
It's too risky! The river's already up two feet.

EXPEDITION MEMBER # 2
Goddamn it! You can't just leave them down there!

JIM
They're probably on their way back up...

EXPEDITION MEMBER # 1
It's been over six hours now. If they don't leave soon...

The sentence hangs in the air. Everyone is fully aware of the implications. Jim grabs the DIVE COM.

JIM
Forward Base, forward base, this is basecamp, over...

Josh slips back into the shadows before anyone notices he was there.

INT. JOSH'S TENT - NIGHT

Josh sits in the entrance to his tent, unable to sleep. He gazes toward the basecamp office, where several team members continue to ARGUE with each other. Others hang around, impotent and useless.

Josh gazes at the approaching storm and glances nervously at his INDIGLO DIVEWATCH. A sudden CRACK of thunder startles him. The storm is clearly getting closer.

JOSH
Fuck it!

Josh sits up and angrily starts pulling on his boots.

JOSH
Fuck him. Fucking idiot.

EXT. CLIFF AT TOP OF DOLINE - NIGHT

A thousand stars splinter the night sky. A full moon casts a ghostly pall over the camp. Josh stands at the edge of the doline wearing his waterproofs and climbing harness.

The ROAR from the waterfall has increased dramatically. No longer a gentle cascade, the powerful torrent CASCADES far out over the cliff wall, plunging violently into the cave below. Josh deliberates. He stares down at the maelstrom of white-water CRASHING its way into the cave. It looks scarey as hell.

Looking up, Josh notices a figure watching him from the opposite side of the doline. The grotesque MASK of the Shaman glints in the moonlight.

A serene look suddenly spreads across Josh's face. In an instant he's calm and confident.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
"Only those pure of spirit".

Josh steps off the cliff and drops into the darkness.

INT. FORWARD BASE

Victoria's flashlight flickers on. Her eyes dart around in confusion as she tries to figure out what woke her.

The NOISE from the stream has increased dramatically. The level of the water in the lake has risen to the point where it's drenched the bottom of her sleeping bag. She KICKS Carl awake and stumbles across to Frank. Frank sits bolt upright as Victoria's light flits across his face.

FRANK (URGENT WHISPER)
(continuing)
Wake the others. Quickly.

Frank pulls on his boots, grabs his flashlight and scrambles toward the flooded communication tent.

INT. FORWARD BASE - COMMUNICATION TENT

All the electronics are dead, submerged under two feet of water. Frank grabs the DIVE COM.

FRANK
Basecamp, basecamp...

Frank flicks a switch. FZZZT! A burst of SPARKS as the system shorts out. Frank races back outside.

EXT. FORWARD BASE.

Frank marches toward the sump. The other team members are already gathered on the shoreline. Their combined lights reveal a disturbing sight: the cave is flooding, the water level rising so fast, they can actually see it creeping up the shore. Frank has to SHOUT to be heard above the noise of the water.

FRANK
We can't stay here! Secure the equipment!

CARL
Fuck the equipment! Let's just get out of here!

FRANK
You're assuming we can.

Silence as the team considers this. Luko looks terrified.

FRANK
(continuing)
Start kitting up. All of you.

The team race around the camp, securing gear and pulling on their WETSUITS. Frank feeds rope through a CEILING BOLT. George helps secure the REBREATHERS to the rope.

CRAZY GEORGE
What the hell happened to the early warning system?

FRANK (FURIOUS)
Christ knows. Those fuckers had better not be asleep up there! Stand clear!

Frank HEAVES on the rope and hauls the REBREATHERS toward the ceiling of the cave, where they are tied off and secured. The team start donning their climbing harnesses. George passes a rope and CLIPS everyone together.

FRANK
(continuing)
All right, listen up. This is gonna get real nasty. Keep a close eye on the person in front.

Frank starts tearing excess gear off Carl and Victoria's harnesses.

FRANK
Stay on the rope. Three points of contact at all times.

CARL (NERVOUS)
Anything else?

FRANK
Sure. Try not to fuck up.

The team wade out into the river.

EXT. FLOODED RIVER

The raging river surges through miles of narrow passageway. A living force of water that threatens to destroy all in its path.

Chest deep in the icy flow, the exploration team battle their way upstream. Tethered by a single rope, each team member braces themselves against the torrent.

Water POUNDS their bodies, threatening to dash them against the sharp rocks lining the riverbed walls.

EXT. FIREHOSE CLIFF

The team pull themselves out of the surging river, onto a wide ledge at the base of a 50ft Cliff.

CARL (BREATHLESS)
W-Where to now?

Frank flicks his light upwards: the COMMUNICATION CABLE disappears into a narrow tunnel at the top of the cliff. The tunnel is half-flooded. A powerful GEYSER of water shoots several feet out over the cliff edge, before crashing into a deep pool below them.

FRANK
Through there.

CARL (DESPAIRING)
We'll never make it!

Luko starts muttering a PRAYER. He's clearly terrified.

FRANK
Wait here.

Frank scrambles up the cliff face and cautiously approaches the water-filled tunnel. His feet slip and slide on the treacherous rocks. Bracing himself against the tunnel walls, Frank sneaks a look upstream: the tunnel is impassable, the flow too strong.

Frank sags. Then he sees a FLASH of light on the other side of the tunnel.

FRANK (BELLOWING)
Who's there?!

No answer. Then a familiar voice, barely audible against the ROAR of the water.

JOSH (O.S.)
Dad?

Frank's expression changes from shock, to fear, then to anger.

FRANK
Josh? What the hell are you doing?

JOSH (O.S.)
I came to tell you...the cave's flooding!

Frank shakes his head in disbelief.

FRANK
No shit! (furious) Why didn't they call us?

JOSH (O.S.)
They've been trying all night! Your comms are switched off!

Frank's eyes narrow in confusion. He casts a suspicious glance at Carl, far below.

CARL (CALLING UP)
Is someone up there?

INT. ABOVE FIREHOSE CLIFF.

Josh is surrounded by a THUNDERING mass of white-water rapids. He is sheltering behind a GIGANTIC ROCK wedged midstream. Plumes of water jet high around him: it's all he can do to avoid being sucked down into the gaping tunnel.

FRANK (O.S.)
Feed us the rope!

Josh removes a 50 METER ROPE from around his neck. He glances around for an anchor point and loops the rope around the boulder he's sheltering behind.

INT. FIREHOSE CLIFF

Frank catches the rope as it shoots out of the tunnel. He hoists it out of the water.

ZIIIP! Josh slides two JUMARS down the rope to Frank.

CUT TO:

Luko pushes past Carl and Crazy George and starts scrambling up the cliff toward Frank. Blind panic in his eyes.

CRAZY GEORGE
Frank!

Before Frank can stop him, Luko has grabbed the rope and pulled himself into the tunnel.

FRANK
Luko! No!

LUKO
Me mus run way out long ples yia!

PFFFFFT! The water hits Luko like a sledgehammer, knocking the wind out of him and causing him to CRY OUT in pain.

CUT TO:

CREAK! The BOULDER that Josh has lashed the rope around suddenly lurches forward an inch. Josh's eyes widen in fear. He YELLS down the tunnel.

JOSH
Stop! There's too much weight!

CUT TO:

Luko uses brute force to pull himself up the tunnel, his body takes the full brunt of the flow.

FRANK
Luko! Use the jumars! Streamline yourself!

CUT TO:

CREAK! Josh sees the BOULDER tilt toward him.

JOSH
Luko! Go back!

CUT TO:

Luko braces himself and HEAVES on the rope.

FRANK
Josh! Look out!

CUT TO:

Josh spins around just in time to see the BOULDER come CRASHING toward him. The force of the water, combined with Luko's weight has turned it into a fearsome projectile.

Josh leaps forward to escape being crushed. The river sucks him down into the tunnel. CRUNCH! The BOULDER slams into the tunnel entrance, sealing it shut.

CUT TO:

Luko and Josh fly out of the tunnel like champagne corks. They SLAM into Frank, knocking him over the edge of the cliff. BADOOSH! All three plunge into the pool below.

The waterfall suddenly ceases to flow.

Luko surfaces, COUGHING and SPLUTTERING. He scrambles to the base of the cliff and drags himself out of the water.

George and Victoria help pull Frank toward shore. He's badly winded.

Josh fights his way back to the surface at the far side of the pool and is almost sucked downstream. He grabs a rock at the edge of the pool and pulls himself out of the flow.

VARIOUS REACTION SHOTS as the team gaze up at the tunnel where the waterfall used to be. An eerie silence fills the cave. Then a strange GROANING sound, like a human voice. The cliff wall starts CREAKING, as though trying to communicate. Frank's eyes widen in alarm.

FRANK
Everyone back down the tunnel!
Move!

CARL (TERRIFIED)
W-What's happening?

FRANK
It's punching a way through!

BLAM! A fist-sized section of the cliff wall flies toward them as the water blasts a new route downstream.

POP! POP! POP! More sections of the cliff wall explode around them. A large STALACTITE falls from the ceiling, narrowly missing Josh. The cave fills with SPRAY and NOISE. Luko starts scrambling back up the rope just as...

BADOOM! A HISSING, MALEVOLENT geyser of spray SMASHES into him like a thousand firehoses combined. He is blasted through the air and SLAMMED into the far cave wall. Luko crumples and falls into the river. He is immediately washed downstream.

FRANK
Josh! Grab him!

Josh is frozen in shock and unable to move. Luko breaks the surface and reaches toward him, barely conscious.

FRANK
Josh! Help him, for fuck's sake!

Josh watches helplessly as Luko is washed away into the darkness.

VARIOUS SHOTS as the team react to Luko's death.

All eyes eventually turn from Josh to Frank. Frank gazes around the cave, sizing up his adversary. The chamber is quickly filling with water.

FRANK
We're heading back down.

CARL
What? No!

FRANK
We stay here, we'll be drowned like rats.(beat) We've got to find higher ground.

CARL (DESPAIRING)
Where?

FRANK
(long beat) Through the restriction.

VARIOUS REACTION SHOTS as they take this in.

INT. FORWARD CAMP

The entire cavern is almost underwater. The team wade, chest deep, through the muddy water, pushing their way through the floating debris.

FRANK
Grab anything that looks useful. George, prep the 'breathers.

CUT TO:

Victoria's hands are SHAKING in fright as she practices opening and closing the REBREATHER MOUTHPIECE. Frank is busy adjusting her harness.

FRANK
...Try and think of it as a normal night dive. George'll be with you every step of the way...

VICTORIA
I thought George can't dive anymore?

FRANK
We're taking him out of retirement.

VICTORIA (NERVOUS)
Just how tight does it get down there, Frank?

FRANK
It's a body tube. Same as you've done in dry cave, but with water.(beat) You gonna be okay?

VICTORIA
(beat) I guess I'll have to be.

CUT TO:

Carl and George are stuffing CLIMBING ROPES into a bag.

CARL
How the hell does he know the cave isn't flooded past that restriction?

CRAZY GEORGE
Frank reckons it's clear. That's all you need to know.

Crazy George eyes the rising water.

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
One thing's for sure: stay here and y'all better start growing gills.

CUT TO:

In the far section of the cavern, Josh wades through the water, grabbing anything that looks useful. Suddenly, he freezes: in front of him, wrapped around a rock, is Luko's body. It's a ghastly sight. The river has broken every bone in his body. His jaw is almost hanging off. Josh shudders.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
I'm sorry...I'm sorry...I'm sorry...

Luko opens his eyes. Josh jumps in fright.

JOSH
Over here! Someone bring the medical kit!

The others wade over and stand horrified. Frank takes one look at Luko and throws the medical kit away. He leans forward to examine him. Luko tries to speak. Bloody froth pours from his broken jaw.

FRANK
Easy. Don't try to talk.

CARL
How bad is it?

FRANK
(long beat) Leave us alone.

JOSH
What are you going to do?

FRANK
There's nothing we can do.

JOSH
What do you mean?

FRANK
George, take Josh.

JOSH
No, wait. What are you going to do?

FRANK
(beat)
I'm going to take care of it.

VICTORIA (HORRIFIED)
Oh, Jesus, no. No!

Carl puts his arm around Victoria. She shrugs him off.

JOSH
You have to help him!

Josh turns to the others.

JOSH
(continuing)
Tell him! He has to do something.

FRANK
What do you want me to do? He's broken every bone in his body. He can't hold a reg in his mouth.

JOSH
You can't just leave him to die.

FRANK
I don't intend to.

JOSH
No! You have no right to do this!

CRAZY GEORGE
C'mon Josh, let's go...

JOSH
Get your fucking hands off me!

FRANK
George, get him away from here!

JOSH (TO FRANK)
You're going to kill him, aren't you? (beat) You murdering bastard.

Frank suddenly explodes in anger and frustration.

FRANK (FURIOUS)
You haven't a fucking clue have you? Any of you! You've spent your whole lives wrapped in cotton wool. You wanna play at being adventurers? Well welcome to the show! First prize - you get to live, second prize, you don't. Boo-fucking-hoo!

Silence as they consider this. Victoria steps forward, leans toward Luko and kisses his hand. Luko MOANS in pain. Victoria starts to WEEP. Carl leads her away.

JOSH
George. I'm begging you. Please don't let him do this!

CRAZY GEORGE
Come away, Josh.

JOSH (PLEADING)
There must be something we can do? Anything.

CRAZY GEORGE
There is: you can do as Frank says.

Josh stands helpless. After a few seconds, he follows Crazy George into the darkness. Frank approaches his old friend. Though barely conscious, Luko seems to understand what must be done.

CUT TO:

Josh flashes his light back toward his father. Frank is holding Luko's head beneath the surface of the water. Josh shudders and turns away.

INT. UNDERWATER DECO HABITAT - ONE HOUR LATER

The team float upon the surface of the moon pool, wearing full DIVE EQUIPMENT. Frank surfaces. Josh still can't bring himself to look at him.

FRANK (GRIM)
That's it. It's totally flooded.

A moment as they take this in.

CRAZY GEORGE (TO VICTORIA AND CARL)
Alright. Let's start the buddy checks...

Frank swims over to check Josh's REBREATHER.

FRANK
So I finally managed to get you into one of these...

JOSH (FLINCHING)
Get the fuck off me!

An awkward silence. Frank reaches forward and tugs on Josh's harness, tightening his straps. Josh avoids eye contact.

FRANK
Keep hold of the line at all times...I taught you how to clear your mask?

JOSH
Yeah. A hundred times.

FRANK
Show me.

CRAZY GEORGE
All gasses on? Okay. Start callin' the numbers...

CARL
Oxygen 200. Trimix 220.

CRAZY GEORGE
Buoyancy and bailout?

Josh SIGHS and demonstrates the technique.

FRANK
Good. You keep your mouthpiece in at all times. Flood the breathing loop and it's all over...

CARL
Check.

JOSH (PROVOCATIVE)
Like Judes, you mean?

CRAZY GEORGE (TO VICTORIA
Close your mouthpiece.

FRANK (NOT BITING)
Yeah. Just like Judes.

CARL
Here, let me...

JOSH
Look, I remember how to dive! Carl has already taken me through it...

VICTORIA (ANNOYED)
I'm fine!

FRANK
Well now you get to hear it twice. Green light's good, red light's bad. I'll monitor your PPO2 and decompression. You remember what I told you about decompression sickness?

CRAZY GEORGE
Trimix set to 10/80? Gradient factors 15/85? High setpoint at 1.2? Bubble checks? Okay folks, we're good to go...

JOSH
No, 'cause I'm stupid.

Crazy George suddenly leans over and grabs Josh.

CRAZY GEORGE
Hey! You wanna end up like me?

Josh says nothing.

CRAZY GEORGE
Then you better smarten up. You get bent down here, it's gonna ruin your whole day.

VICTORIA (SARCASTIC)
And our day was going so well.

FRANK (TO JOSH AND VICTORIA)
We'll have about four hours of decompression to do once we reach the other side. Stay at the same depth as me, or your blood'll start fizzing like a dropped soda.

VICTORIA
Nice.(acid to Carl) You actually choose to do this?

FRANK
All right, let's visualize the dive. Visibility's gonna be stirred to shit, so we can't use the DPV's. We have a long swim to the restriction. Stay behind me at all times and pace yourselves. The tunnel gets real tight in places. Don't freak out if it silts up. Just stay on the line and wait for it to clear.

CRAZY GEORGE
You want me to bring up the rear?

FRANK
I'll lead, followed by Josh, then Carl, then you. (beat) Victoria at the back.

Victoria glares at Frank. The implication is clear: Frank's worried she'll panic.

FRANK
(continuing)
Focus on breathing. Deep and slow. One person loses it down there, we all die.

Victoria looks sick with fright.

CARL (PATRONIZING)
You can do this, baby. Be brave.

Victoria glares at him murderously.

FRANK
Everyone clear on the plan?

JOSH
Basically, we follow you, keep breathing and hope nothing beeps.

Frank and Crazy George exchange a look.

CRAZY GEORGE
That's about the gist of it.

FRANK
Any questions?

No one says a word.

FRANK
I'll see you on the other side.

VICTORIA (DEADPAN)
Not literally, I hope?

Frank flashes the "down" signal. They sink beneath the surface.

INT. UNDER THE DECO HABITAT.

The water turns a dirty, blood-red ochre as the divers follow Frank into the 'mixing zone'. Their powerful HID LIGHTS barely penetrate the thick clouds of silt that dance and swirl across their face masks. A surreal descent into a pinkish cloud of ghostly shadows.

Frank locates the GUIDELINE and wraps Josh's hand firmly around it. Josh follows Frank's fins into the murk.

INT. UNDERWATER SUMP

VARIOUS SHOTS as a thick shroud of silt cocoons the divers:

Frank appears out of the gloom, his thumb and forefinger circled around the GUIDELINE. He sweeps his arm up and down through the murk, like a blind man using a cane. He passes several plastic CAVE ARROWS, clipped to the line at intervals, pointing the way back out. Suddenly, the cave wall materializes in Frank's HID LIGHT.

Josh jumps in fright as Frank's face suddenly looms out of the dark. They exchange "okay" signals and descend along the cave wall.

CRUMP! Carl bangs into the cave wall, dislodging a huge STALACTITE. He YELLS a muffled warning into his mouthpiece.

Crazy George CURSES as the STALACTITE whizzes by, narrowly missing him. Victoria tightens her grip around Crazy George's wrist. They continue onward.

INT. DEVIL'S RESTRICTION

Frank leads the divers along the GUIDELINE until they reach the claustrophobic tunnel. It's barely visible through the milky white-out.

Victoria's eyes widen when she sees how tight the restriction is. We hear her BREATHING increase as she fights the rising wave of panic. Frank circles his flashlight: 'okay?' He receives a shaky signal back from her.

Frank and George remove the EQUIPMENT PACKS from their harness and clip them around their ankles, so they can be dragged through the tunnel. Silt swirls.

Frank removes his REBREATHER and holds it in front of him. The others nervously do the same. Frank signals for Josh to 'buddy up' with him. Pushing his REBREATHER ahead of him, Frank disappears into the hole. After a few seconds, Josh follows.

INT. BODY TUBE - DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

POV Josh: He follows Frank into the tunnel, keeping his hand on the line at all times. Frank's pack and fins can just be seen scraping along the tunnel ahead. Breathe. Push. Breathe. Push.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Stay green. Please stay green. Don't beep. Please. Don't fucking beep.

INT. UNDERWATER TUNNEL - DEVIL'S RESTRICTION

Back at the entrance, Carl disappears into the tunnel. Crazy George turns toward Victoria and taps her on the shoulder. She jumps. George shows her a message on his WRIST SLATE: "YOU CAN DO IT", next to a SMILEY FACE. Victoria nods her head, grateful. Crazy George squeezes her hand reassuringly. Then he disappears into the tunnel.

INT. BODY TUBE - DEVIL'S RESTRICTION.

A nightmarish sequence as the divers crawl down the body tube in near-zero visibilty:

Frank glances behind him. The dull orange glow of Josh's light approaches. They exchange 'okay' signals.

Further back in the tunnel, Carl wedges stuck. He tries to turn around but can't move. His BREATHING skyrockets. Carl braces himself and STRAINS against the ceiling. White fragments of rock break free and dance like snowflakes against his helmet. He eventually manages to pull himself forward.

Crazy George freezes as the ceiling starts to CREAK and GROAN. He glances back and sees Victoria waiting patiently for him. They exchange 'okay' signals. After a few seconds, George continues, his eyes glued nervously to the ceiling.

Victoria claws her way forward, following Crazy George's EQUIPMENT BAG. Her eyes are fixed with dogged determination. She's HUMMING a tune: "ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS", to calm herself down.

INT. UNEXPLORED ABYSS.

Darkness. Then the hazy glow of approaching lights. A thick cloud of silt billows from the tunnel in the cliff wall. Like free-fall parachutists emerging from a cloud, the divers break through into the gin-clear waters of the abyss.

Victoria finally appears, a victorious grin on her face. Crazy George swims over, shakes her hand and then helps her back into the REBREATHER. Frank shows Josh his VR3 DIVE COMPUTER:

DEPTH 102M. TOTAL DECO: 245 MINS

Josh nods his understanding. Frank flashes everyone the 'up' signal.

VARIOUS SHOTS as the team slowly work their way up the cave walls, decompressing every few feet.

Frank swims over to check on the others periodically. The TOTAL DECO TIME slowly ticks down on their DIVE COMPUTERS.

Crazy George hovers next to Victoria, adjusting her buoyancy as required. Victoria is SHIVERING from the cold. George rubs her hands, trying to warm her up.

Carl swims away from the others, far out into the abyss. He's busy exploring the far side of the cave.

Frank signals for Josh to ascend to the next deco stop. His eyes narrow in concern when he sees Josh isn't moving. He swims over and catches him playing the 'OCTOPUS' video game on his VR3 DIVE COMPUTER. Frank MUMBLES angrily into his MOUTHPIECE and signals "up".

Finally, Crazy George flashes his beam to get everyone's attention: the team visibly relax as their lights reflect off the surface, far above them.

INT. UNEXPLORED CAVERN

VARIOUS REACTION SHOTS as the team surface.

They remove their MOUTHPIECES and gratefully suck down great gulps of air. Then they gaze around them in wonder. The cavern is huge: an endless dessert of sand dunes rising from the water and disappearing into the darkness. A sunless Sahara, with no sign of the walls or ceiling.

Crazy George throws back his head and emits a WHOOP of delight. His voice ECHOES into the darkness.

INT. UNEXPLORED CAVERN - THE NEXT DAY

Blackness. Josh wakes with a start and stares up at the cave ceiling. It takes him a moment to remember where he is.

Frank is busy changing the batteries in the FLASHLIGHTS. George is filling a DRIED FOOD PACK with water. Carl is sat alone on a rock, staring out into space. Victoria lies SHIVERING inside her SPACE BLANKET: she's hypothermic and utterly miserable. GEORGE offers her some food.

Josh crawls toward the EQUIPMENT BAGS and starts rummaging through the SUPPLIES. He pulls out a food bag and walks down to the water. Frank crouches by the shoreline, his flashlight fixed upon a submerged rock far out in the water. He's watching, listening, feeling the cave.

FRANK
How are the supplies looking?

Josh is still angry. He ignores his father.

FRANK (ANGRY)
I said...

JOSH
There's food for a couple of days.

FRANK
This place will be underwater in a couple of days.

JOSH (DERISIVELY)
How do you know?

FRANK
See that rock? Last night it was above water.

Frank marches over to the EQUIPMENT BAG and pulls out several items: A ROPE, COMPASS and VERTICAL GEAR. Carl shuffles over.

CARL
How long before they come and get us?

FRANK
Who?

CARL
The rescue party.

Frank smiles at this.

FRANK
There's no rescues down here, mate. Only body recoveries.

CARL
But when word gets out I'm missing...

FRANK
Then what? No amount of money is gonna save you now. Folk up there already think you're dead.

CRAZY GEORGE (DEADPAN)
Reckon I should of sold my Delvenet shares.

Frank smiles as he shoulders the rope.

CARL (FUMING)
I just want to know what the plan is.

FRANK
No plan ever survived contact with the enemy. And this cave just shat out every plan I had.

CARL (SHOUTING)
Then what, pray tell, do you suggest we do!?!

Frank marches over to him.

FRANK
You could try calling your lawyers, so they can sue me. Oh, no. I forgot...

Frank lowers his voice to an angry whisper

FRANK
Some fucker switched the comms off!

Carl goes white as a sheet as Frank storms off.

FRANK (TO JOSH)
Stay here. I'm going to scout ahead.

Carl shouts after him.

CARL (CALLING AFTER HIM)
I still think we should sit tight and wait a few days!

FRANK (OVER HIS SHOULDER)
For what? The lights to go out? Batteries won't last forever.

Carl considers this. Then reaches up and switches his HELMET LIGHT off.

CARL
Fucker.

Josh watches his father's light disappear into the distance. After a few moments, he decides to follow him.

INT. SUNLESS SAHARA

An expanse of sand dunes stretch along the banks of an underground lake. Frank follows the shoreline, flashing his light around the cave. Josh follows, keeping out of sight.

Frank pauses to take a compass reading. Josh ducks as Frank's light swings toward him. When Josh looks up, Frank is gone. Josh considers following. Then gazes nervously around him.

JOSH
Fuck it.

He stumbles back the way he came.

INT. UNEXPLORED CAVERN

Back at the sump, Victoria is still SHIVERING uncontrollably. A single light casts gloomy shadows across the walls.

CRAZY GEORGE (TO VICTORIA)
How you doing?

VICTORIA (SHIVERING)
I-I still can't feel my feet.

Crazy George lifts the space blanket and pulls off Victoria's soaked WETSUIT BOOTEES.

CRAZY GEORGE
They're like blocks of ice.

Crazy George starts rubbing Victoria's feet and legs. Carl casts a glance but decides to say nothing.

VICTORIA
T-Thank you, George.

CRAZY GEORGE
Ain't nothin'.

VICTORIA
I mean back there. The way you h-helped me. It was...was...

Victoria stops herself before she gets upset.

CARL (TO GEORGE)
Pity our illustrious leader doesn't share your humanity.

CRAZY GEORGE
Frank's got Josh to think about now.

CARL
That man only thinks about himself. He'd leave us all to die if he had to.

CRAZY GEORGE
Don't go sayin' that. (trying to convince himself) Frank's gonna get us out of here.

CARL
Christ, George. Wake up. You saw what he did to Luko. What makes you think he values our lives any differently?

CRAZY GEORGE
He just lives by a different set of rules, that's all. He did what needed to be done. None of us had the stomach for it.

CARL
Precisely. And that's what makes us human beings.

VICTORIA (ANGRY)
Spare us the morality lessons, Carl. You have no right to judge anyone, least of all Frank. It was a mercy killing.

CARL
Yeah? Let's see if the authorities agree when we get out of here.

VICTORIA
You can be such an asshole.

CARL
I can't believe you're taking his side in this!

VICTORIA (BITTER)
He's not the one who got us into this mess!

CARL
What's that supposed to mean?

VICTORIA
You know damn well.

INT. SUNLESS SAHARA

Josh scrambles BREATHLESSLY to the top of a boulder pile. He looks confused and scared when his light fails to reveal the others waiting on the other side. Instead, a vast GAPING TUNNEL leads further into the cave.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Fuck! (beat) Keep going, you ain't lost.(beat) They have to be through there...

Josh stumbles on, deeper into the cave.

INT. UNEXPLORED CAVERN

Victoria pulls herself to her feet and staggers towards Carl.

VICTORIA
You turned off the comm system.(beat) Didn't you?

Crazy George looks up.

CARL
Why the hell would I do that?

VICTORIA (EXPLODING)
"Uncontactable until further notice!" Well, we're pretty un-fucking-contactable now!

CARL
You're delusional!

VICTORIA
Delusional? Look where we fucking are! You may have just killed us all.

A voice from the shadows.

FRANK
It don't matter now.

Frank steps out of the darkness. He's overheard everything.

FRANK
(continuing)
None of it. What matters now is survival.

CARL
You're enjoying this aren't you? Making life or death decisions. Playing God.

FRANK
There's no God down here, mate. This cave doesn't give a flying fuck about you, me, or Christ-all-mighty. We're specks of dust to her, passing through.

CARL
What the hell was I thinking: letting you talk me into this? You're a fucking animal. Even your son can't stand the sight of you.

Frank glances around.

FRANK
Where is Josh?

INT. SUNLESS SAHARA

Josh reaches the top of another dune. A vast expanse of nothingness lays before him.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Fuck it. Give them a shout, they're bound to hear you.(beat) You'd never hear the last of it.(beat) Admit it: you're lost.(beat) Alright, retrace your steps...

Josh turns and flashes his light back the way he's come. Three identical-looking tunnels lead into the rockface behind him.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Oh, shit.

CUT TO:

Frank and George are following Josh's footprints. They end abruptly at the edge of a shingle collapse.

FRANK
Josh! Josh!

His voice ECHOES eerily around the walls of the cave.

CRAZY GEORGE
Quit freakin' out. He'll be fine.

FRANK
Goddamn it, George! You were supposed to watch him!

CRAZY GEORGE
The boy wanted to go off exploring.(grinning) Remind you of anyone?

Frank scowls and storms away. Crazy George smiles as he watches him disappear into the darkness.

CRAZY GEORGE (IN PAIN)
Gnnn!

George suddenly winces in pain. He lifts his arm and flexes it, a concerned look on his face.

CUT TO:

Josh is about to enter the largest tunnel when...

FRANK (DISTANT O.S.)
Josh!

He freezes as he hears Frank's voice. But he can't tell which direction it's coming from.

JOSH
I'm through here!

A few seconds of silence.

FRANK (CLOSER O.S.)
Don't move! Keep talking!

JOSH (SLOWLY CIRCLING)
What do you want me to say? (beat) I think I've found the way forward! (beat) I was just coming to tell you...

BLAM! A hand shoots out of the dark and grabs Josh by the shoulder. Frank spins him around and shakes him.

FRANK
I thought I told you to stay with the group?

JOSH
I-I...

FRANK
You get lost down here and it's all over. Don't ever wander off again! Understand?

Josh bristles in anger and SLAPS Frank's hand away.

JOSH
Get off me!

Josh's voice ECHOES into the far distance. Frank's head snaps up: it sounds like the cave goes on forever. Crazy George steps out of the shadows, still flexing his wrist. He grins through the pain and slaps Josh on the back.

CRAZY GEORGE
Shoot, I reckon the boy's done found the way forward!

INT. FOOTBALL FIELD CHAMBER

A vast chamber, larger than several football fields. No sign of the walls or ceiling. Three specks of light appear in the distance. Two more lights trail behind them.

Josh plods along next to Crazy George. They both struggle under the weight of their REBREATHERS and also carry a heavy EQUIPMENT BAG between them. Crazy George keeps flexing his hand every few seconds, a worried expression on his face.

JOSH
Asshole. He's a fucking asshole.

CRAZY GEORGE
Hell, he's just tryin' to look out for you. Easy enough to get lost in a place like this.

JOSH
Nothing's ever good enough. I remember writing a school project for him once. A cave diving adventure. He hands it back to me with a list of technical notes...

CRAZY GEORGE (A KNOWING SMILE)
Yeah. Frank sure likes to give a lotta notes...

JOSH
I was seven years old, George!

CRAZY GEORGE
Did you hear about the time Frank really fucked up?

Josh tries to conceal his interest.

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
Couple of years ago, he's in the outback, checking out this massive hole, name of...

Crazy George grinds to a halt, confused and then a little scared as he struggles to remember the name.

CRAZY GEORGE
Damn, what was that place called?

He drops the EQUIPMENT BAG and leans, exhausted, against a large rock. Josh looks at him, bemused.

CRAZY GEORGE (SHAKING HIS HEAD)
Anyhow, he backs his truck right up to the water, so he can tie off his line. Then he does his dive.

Crazy George takes a long pull of water from his flask.

CRAZY GEORGE
On the way back out, he sees the entrance is blocked by a vehicle, sixty feet underwater. And he's like: "Shit, that licence plate looks familiar". (beat) He'd only gone and left the handbrake off!

Josh smiles.

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
Had to smash open his back window, just so he could swim out!

Josh LAUGHS.

CRAZY GEORGE (CHUCKLING)
And then he has to haul his sorry ass back over 60 miles of desert!
(beat)
He's a hell of a guy, your old man. Once you get to know him.

Josh considers this.

CRAZY GEORGE
(beat) Take the bag will ya? Go on, I'll catch up directly.

Crazy George waits until Josh has gone, then starts scribbling numbers onto his WRIST SLATE. His hand is SHAKING uncontrollably as he writes: 101-7=

Crazy George struggles to do the math. After a few seconds, he realizes he can't work out the answer.

CRAZY GEORGE (SCARED WHISPER)
Ah, shit...

He opens the MOUTHPIECE on his REBREATHER and flushes the loop with the button marked OXYGEN. Breathing from the REBREATHER, he staggers after Josh's light.

INT. BOTTOM OF BOULDER PILE, FOOTBALL FIELD CHAMBER

Football Field chamber ends in a huge mountain of rubble that disappears into the higher reaches of the cave. Victoria collapses, SHIVERING on a rock. She watches Carl's light ascending up the debris slope, far above her.

VICTORIA (ANNOYED)
Carl! Wait for me!

A voice in the darkness startles her. Frank steps out of the shadows.

FRANK
Are you okay?

VICTORIA (SHIVERING)
Hot bath and a brandy and I'd be fine.

FRANK
We'll camp here.

Frank nods toward Carl's distant light.

FRANK
(continuing)
I'm guessing this is a little more adventurous than his usual excursions?

VICTORIA
Next year we're sticking to Disneyland.

FRANK
How'd you ever wind up with a guy like that?

VICTORIA
I ask myself that question every day. (beat) I was one of his guides on Everest. (smiling) Bastard had me fired so I'd come and work for him. How about you? How'd you get involved with the dot-com devil?

FRANK
Usual sponsors would have turned this into a circus. Twenty guys, all with different agendas. I've dealt with enough of those fucksticks to last a lifetime.

Rocks CLATTER down the slope as Carl reaches the top.

FRANK
I figured your boy up there was the best way to get some real exploration done.(beat) This wasn't quite what I had in mind.

Victoria smiles as she gazes into Frank's eyes.

VICTORIA
Well. I'm glad you're here to look after us.

FRANK
Don't go fooling yourself. Down here, you're on your own.

A voice from the darkness above them.

CARL
Victoria! You have to see this. It's incredible!

Victoria shakes her head sadly and starts climbing the boulder pile.

EXT. TOP OF BOULDER PILE.

Carl stands on top of the highest boulder. The team stagger up the final few yards to join him.

CARL
Welcome to 'Carl's Cavern'.

Frank and Crazy George exchange a withering look. FLASH! Carl's powerful CAMERA STROBE reveals the vastness of the chamber they have just walked through. The walls and ceiling are covered in millions of delicate white straws.

CARL (CLICKING PHOTOS)
Hey, Josh! Get up here. We'll make the cover of 'National Geographic' yet!

CRAZY GEORGE (TO FRANK)
National Lampoon, more like.

Josh scrambles up to the highest boulder and poses for Carl. Frank storms over and snatches the camera off Carl. He hurls it far over the edge of the boulder slope. After a few seconds, we hear it SMASH apart below.

A moment of tension as Carl and Frank face each other. Suddenly, Carl launches himself at Frank. George stumbles between them.

CRAZY GEORGE
Whoa! Let's calm it down!

CARL (SCREAMING)
You fucking asshole! You fuck, fuck, fucking asshole!

FRANK
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

CARL
Why the fuck would you do that? What gives you the fucking right to do that? To me?

Frank pushes past George and grabs Carl by the throat, SLAMMING him against the boulder.

FRANK
You listen to me! When they pull our bodies outta here, they ain't finding no Goddamn tourist shots. Not of me and not of my son, grinning like an idiot! Understand?

JOSH
Let him go!

CRAZY GEORGE
Jesus, Frank. You're choking him.

VICTORIA
Frank, please. Let him go.

Frank releases Carl. Carl slumps to the floor, clutching his throat.

FRANK
They'll find us with our tanks empty and our fingers scraped to the bone.

Frank turns to Josh.

FRANK
(continuing)
They ain't handing your mother a Goddamn photograph.

Frank storms away, back down the boulder slope.

INT. BOTTOM OF BOULDER PILE - NEXT MORNING

TIGHT on Frank: looking grim as he fits the last set of BATTERIES into the flashlights. He shoulders his pack and starts KICKING everyone awake.

FRANK
C'mon. Let's move.

Various GROANS as everyone rolls over in their SPACE BLANKETS in a vain attempt to go back to sleep.

FRANK (ROARING)
NOW!

INT. TUNNELS

VARIOUS SHOTS: Frank leads the team along a series of narrow tunnels, winding ever upwards. Several smaller tunnels branch off. Frank ignores them and continues moving forward.

INT. THE DROP

The tunnel ends abruptly at the edge of a sheer drop. No way forward. The team collapse to the floor, utterly exhausted. Frank crouches at the edge of the precipice and launches a rock.

After six seconds, we hear a distant SPLOSH!

CARL
Maybe we missed something? We could always go back...

FRANK
We ain't going back.

Frank tosses the rope down into the drop and secures it.

FRANK (TO VICTORIA)
I want you to start ferrying the others down as quickly as possible...

VICTORIA (SHIVERING)
I-I'll try. I'm just not sure I c-can hold a r-ope anymore...

JOSH
I'll do it. Give it to me.

Frank casts a quick glance at Carl.

FRANK
No!

Josh sags and slouches away. Frank calls after him.

FRANK
I need a good rope man below.

Josh swells slightly at this veiled compliment and starts eagerly prepping his vertical gear. Victoria flashes an approving smile at Frank. Frank shrugs as if to say "yeah, yeah".

Carl ambles over to Crazy George, who is resting further down the tunnel, breathing oxygen from his REBREATHER. He quickly conceals his SHAKING ARM as Carl approaches.

CARL (CONCERNED)
You okay?

CRAZY GEORGE
Hell, yeah. Just catchin' my breath.

CARL (WHISPERING)
Why the fuck is 'Captain Caveman' taking us deeper? Makes no sense at all.

CRAZY GEORGE (SHRUGS)
Guess he's following the river.

CARL
All the way to the ocean?

CRAZY GEORGE
If that's what it takes.

Crazy George goes back onto OXYGEN. Carl calls over to Frank.

CARL
We've been climbing for six hours now! Surely we must be close to the surface?

FRANK (STUDYING THE ROCK)
I reckon we are about...thirty feet from the surface.

Carl gazes up in astonishment. And hope.

FRANK
But unless you brought some dynamite, that ain't gonna help us much.

CARL
We could at least split up and search those passageways we passed?

FRANK
They're too small. We go back down. And hope the lower cave ain't flooded yet.

CARL
I say we vote on it.

FRANK (LAUGHING)
You wanna wake up and have a word with yourself. This ain't no democracy.

Frank steps off the edge of the drop and rappels down into the darkness. Josh clips himself onto the rope.

CARL
Josh. Help me search those tunnels.

Josh deliberates.

CARL
You don't have to do everything he says, Josh. You and I can find our own way out of here.

FRANK (O.S.)
Josh! Get down here!

Josh glances down at his father's light far below. He shrugs and casts Carl an apologetic look. Josh disappears over the cliff. Carl glowers after him.

CARL (ANNOYED)
Idiots.

Carl shoulders his pack.

CARL (TO VICTORIA)
C'mon. Let's go.

Victoria glares up at him, shivering and miserable. She slowly shakes her head.

VICTORIA
I-I'm staying with them, Carl.

TIGHT on Carl: an angry and betrayed look upon his face as he struggles to deal with this rejection.

INT. BELOW THE DROP

Frank stands waist deep in an underground lake, holding onto the bottom of the rope. He gazes up at Josh's light far above him. ZIIIIIIP! Josh zooms down the rope and breaks hard, bouncing to a halt only inches above Frank's head. Frank shoots him a disapproving look.

FRANK
Quit showin' off. Wait here and help the others. I'll scout on ahead.

Frank shoulders his EQUIPMENT BAG and wades out into the water.

JOSH (DISAPPOINTED)
When do I get to scout?

FRANK
Soon as you stop getting lost.

INT. THE DROP

Crazy George is rappeling down a particularly steep part of the shaft. His REBREATHER dangles several feet below him, acting like a pendulum. His face is screwed up in pain as he edges his way down the sheer cliff wall.

CRAZY GEORGE
Gnnnng!

His body suddenly spasms, his fist clamping up into a tightly balled fist.

CRAZY GEORGE (SCARED WHISPER)
Oh, Christ. Not now. Please not now...

A SHOUT from above causes him to look up. Victoria peers down at him, a concerned look on her face.

VICTORIA
Are you okay?

CRAZY GEORGE
I-I'm fine!

Momentarily distracted, he doesn't notice his LONG HAIR slipping into the FIVE-BAR RACK. George pushes himself weakly off the wall. ZIIIP! He plunges several feet down the rope, his hand too weak to operate the brake. His hair gets YANKED VIOLENTLY into the rack, almost scalping him. In extreme pain, he grits his teeth and remains silent, reluctant to let the others know he is in trouble.

CRAZY GEORGE (ANNOYED, TO HIMSELF)
That's just great, George. Call the fucking rope police.

He swings himself painfully toward a rocky ledge. Tries to transfer his body weight. Success! A SIGH of relief. Reaching toward his DIVE KNIFE, he carefully starts sawing away at his trapped hair.

INT. BELOW THE DROP

Josh spots something floating on the surface of the water. Fishing it out, he realizes it is a clump of HAIR. Curious, he flashes his light up the shaft.

INT. THE DROP

Crazy George has almost freed himself from the tangle. As he goes to cut the final strand of hair...CRACK! The rock ledge supporting him suddenly crumbles.

SHNICK! His knife SLICES clean through the descent rope. Crazy George starts to fall, his hands scrambling to find purchase, his fingernails SCRAPING the rock until...

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
Unnnng!

His fingers wedge into a ledge. He clings precariously to the edge of a 300ft drop, his legs and REBREATHER dangling above the void.

CRAZY GEORGE
(continuing)
Shit shit shit!

INT. BELOW THE DROP

Josh gazes up in horror as the rope coils into the water around him.

INT. THE DROP

Victoria feels the rope go slack. She shouts down the drop.

VICTORIA
Off rope?

CUT TO:

Crazy George shakes his head at the irony.

CRAZY GEORGE
No shit, I'm off rope!

A SHOUT from below.

JOSH (O.S.)
Rig another drop line! Now!

CUT TO:

Victoria leans over the edge and sees Crazy George clinging to the ledge far below. The severed rope hangs several feet above his head. No way he can reach it.

VICTORIA (TO CARL)
Fetch the rope! Quickly!

Carl scrambles toward the EQUIPMENT PACK. As he tears through it, a dreadful realization hits him.

CARL
Frank has the rope bag!

CUT TO:

Crazy George's hand SHAKES uncontrollably as he tries to pull himself back up. It's impossible. He peers down and sees Josh's light far below him. He closes his eyes in terror and mumbles a quiet PRAYER.

EXT. BELOW THE DROP

Josh yells out into the darkness.

JOSH
Dad! Dad!

No reply. Josh's eyes narrow in fierce determination. He steels himself, grabs the end of the severed rope and ties it to his harness.

JOSH
Hold on! I'm coming up!

VICTORIA (O.S.)
No! Josh! Stay where you are!

Josh starts to free-climb the sheer walls of the shaft.

CUT TO:

In a last desperate effort, Crazy George swings his legs toward a narrow crevice. Transferring his body weight, he manages to unclip the carabiner supporting his REBREATHER. It falls away into the darkness below.

CUT TO:

Josh navigates his way up a vertical crack in the rock, his feet slipping on the treacherous walls of the shaft. He leans precariously toward a handhold just out of his reach...

SMACK! The rebreather smashes into him, spinning him off the wall. Josh starts to fall. Lightning reflexes as Josh manages to grab a narrow ledge. The rebreather SMASHES apart on the rocks below. Josh spots a ledge on the opposite side of the shaft and LEAPS toward it, just managing to cling on.

JOSH (GASPING)
This is tough enough without you throwing things at me!

A voice from below.

FRANK
Josh! There's a ledge to your left!

Josh gazes down at his father's light far below him. Then he starts to climb.

CUT TO:

Victoria and Carl can see Josh edging his way up the walls toward Crazy George.

VICTORIA
He's nearly there! Hold on!

CUT TO:

Crazy George's grip is finally about to give way.

CRAZY GEORGE
I-I can't hold on!

JOSH
Two more seconds, while I rebelay!

Crazy George peers down and sees Josh HAMMERING a BOLT into the smooth cliff wall several feet below him.

CRAZY GEORGE
I'm slipping!

FRANK (O.S.)
No! Josh is right beneath you!

JOSH
Below!

Josh lets the hammer fall into the darkness.

CUT TO:

Frank leaps to one side as the hammer SPLASHES into the water. He gazes up at Josh, flinching with every movement the boy makes.

CUT TO:

Josh CLIPS his COW'S TAIL into the BOLT, then reaches out toward Crazy George. Crazy George swings tantalizingly out of his reach. Adjusting his footing, he leans out further.

JOSH
(continuing)
I-I've...got you!

Josh grabs Crazy George's harness. Just as George's grip gives way.

CRAZY GEORGE
Ahhhhh!

Crazy George tumbles away into the darkness, taking Josh with him. Josh keeps a firm grip on George's harness and after a few feet...TWANG! His COW'S TAIL snaps taut, SLAMMING them both violently against the walls of the shaft.

CRAZY GEORGE
Gnnn!

Crazy George spins inverted, Josh clutching his harness. He looks up at him, clearly terrified.

JOSH
Pass your safety!

Crazy George's hand shakes as he reaches below him and grabs his COW'S TAIL.

JOSH (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Now pull yourself back up! Quickly!

Crazy George slowly inches the rope toward Josh's outstretched fingers. Josh finally grabs his carabiner and...CLICK! Snaps him into his own harness.

With a GRUNT of relief, Josh releases his grip. They both swing free, hanging suspended in mid air. BREATHLESS and exhausted.

CRAZY GEORGE (SMILING GRATEFULLY)
And I thought they called me crazy!

Josh threads the severed rope into the bolt and rappels down with George dangling below.

INT. BELOW THE DROP

Frank is performing a full NEUROLOGICAL EXAM on Crazy George, who is breathing oxygen from Frank's REBREATHER. His own REBREATHER lays smashed on the rocks around him. Crazy George is having trouble focussing on Frank's finger as he waves it in front of his face. Josh watches from a few feet away, supervising the rope as the others rappel down.

FRANK (TO JOSH)
See how his left eye is tracking much slower than the right?

Josh nods his head.

FRANK
Helium bubble. Wedged in his spine. (to George) You've bent yourself good and proper this time.

Crazy George takes the MOUTHPIECE out and pats the OXYGEN CYLINDER in the REBREATHER.

CRAZY GEORGE
Ah, quit worrying. Couple more hours of this shit and I'll be right as rain. (beat) Just remind me not to smoke.

FRANK (SMILING)
Soon as we find some deep water, we'll recompress you.

CRAZY GEORGE
(beat) That was a hell of a thing your boy just did, Frank.

Frank walks over to Josh and places a hand on his shoulder.

FRANK
Yeah. It was.

Josh can't believe it. A compliment? From Frank? Frank shoulders one of the REBREATHERS and wades out into the darkness. He pauses below the drop and gazes up.

FRANK (WITH A WINK TO GEORGE)
Course, I'd have stuck to the left-hand side of the shaft. Much better hand-holds.

Josh and Crazy George exchange a look. Josh rolls his eyes.

INT. RIVER TUNNEL

The deafening ROAR of a waterfall can be heard close by. Frank and Josh are busy rigging the easiest route downstream. Josh looks back to see Crazy George staggering through the waist-deep water.

JOSH (CONCERNED)
What's gonna happen if he can't walk any more?

FRANK (DEADLY SERIOUS)
I'll have to kill him.

Josh looks shocked. Then realizes Frank is joking. Frank casts an admiring glance back toward Crazy George. Badly injured, yet still helping Victoria navigate the river.

FRANK
(laughing)
We'll stick the poor bugger on oxygen at 10 meters. He'll be right as rain.

They walk on for a few paces.

JOSH
You think we could do something safer next year? Like climb the North face of the Eiger?

FRANK (GRINNING)
Yeah, sure. I reckon I owe you that.(beat) No ropes though?

Josh walks on. Frank watches him for a few seconds.

FRANK
I haven't been the greatest father, Josh. I realize that.

Josh stops in his tracks.

FRANK
I guess I just got too hooked into all of this.

Josh turns and stares at him.

FRANK
But it was never really about exploration. This place is my church.

Frank gazes reverently around the cave.

FRANK
My sanctum. The only place I get to hold a mirror to my soul.
(beat) I do this because I have to.

JOSH (BITTER)
Yeah? (beat) Must be real nice for you.

Josh walks off. Frank sags visibly as he is overcome with an enormous sense of guilt and loss. He reaches out and grabs the cold cave walls for support. Then gazes sadly after his son.

INT. WATERFALLS

The river suddenly disappears over a series of three waterfalls. A steep cliff borders the edge of the falls: no easy way down. A thick MIST fills the air. Frank has to SHOUT to be heard above the ROAR of water.

FRANK
Reckon you can find the way down?

JOSH
Piece of piss!

Frank flashes him a disapproving look.

JOSH (WEARILY)
I'll be careful.

FRANK
We'll rig the zip line!

Frank wades back over to the shallows at the edge of the falls and pulls a 50 METER ROPE out of the equipment bag.

Victoria sits on a rock a few feet away, SHIVERING uncontrollably. She's helping Crazy George keep his MOUTHPIECE in place.

Frank's eyes register concern: Crazy George's condition has worsened considerably. He's turning blue and his facial muscles now droop like a stroke victim.

FRANK
(continuing)
How you doing, tough guy?

George weakly flashes him an "okay" signal.

FRANK (POINTING)
(continuing)
Looks like there's a deep pool below the falls. Hang in there. Won't be long now.

CUT TO:

On the far side of the river, Josh navigates his way down the treacherous rocks lining the falls. It's a torturous descent.

CUT TO:

Frank and Carl brace themselves against the flow and wade toward a rocky island that sits midstream above the waterfall.

FRANK
Pass the cams!

Frank slips a large CAM into a crack in the ceiling while Carl prepares the drop rope.

CUT TO:

Josh arrives at the pool below the last waterfall: it's deep and crystal clear. Josh quickly fixes a CAM into the wall and flashes his light up toward Frank.

CUT TO:

Frank receives the signal and throws the rope far over the falls. Josh grabs the rope as it floats past him. He secures it to the CAM and ties it off.

CUT TO:

Carl and Frank HEAVE on the rope. The rope tightens, forming a ZIP LINE above the three waterfalls.

CARL (TO FRANK)
I have it! Start sending the equipment down!

Frank clips the REBREATHERS and EQUIPMENT BAGS to the rope. The first REBREATHER is launched over the waterfall and ZIPS down the line, SPLASHING into the plunge pool beside Josh. Another REBREATHER zooms down the line seconds later. The EQUIPMENT BAGS soon follow.

FRANK
George! You're next!

Victoria helps Crazy George to his feet. They stagger forward.

POV Crazy George: as he wades through the water toward Frank, his world starts to SPIN. Vertigo assaults his senses. He lurches toward the edge of the falls.

CRAZY GEORGE
Frank...I...

His world continues to kaleidoscope until...SPLASH! Crazy George faceplants the water and is washed toward the edge of the falls. Victoria is dragged into the water with him.

CARL (POINTING)
Frank!

Frank leaps into the water. As Crazy George sweeps by, Frank grabs him and heaves him toward a BOULDER midstream. Crazy George clings weakly to the boulder as Frank flashes his light around, looking for Victoria.

CARL
Over there!

Victoria is clinging to a rock at the edge of the falls, buffeted by the cascade of water. Frank wades out toward her, bracing himself against the ferocious flow. He manages to grab her SAFETY ROPE, just as her grip gives way.

Victoria disappears over the edge of the falls. She hangs inverted from her harness, engulfed by the torrent of water that pounds her against the rock. Frank struggles to keep hold of her safety rope.

CUT TO:

At the bottom of the falls, Josh is about to unclip the REBREATHERS from the rope when he hears Victoria SCREAM. Josh races back up the waterfall.

CUT TO:

Frank is slowly being dragged over the edge of the falls, his hands and feet scrambling to find purchase. Carl releases the ZIP LINE and staggers over to help them.

FRANK (TO CARL)
No! Stay on the rope!

Carl turns back but it's too late. TWANG! The ZIP LINE whiplashes through the ANCHOR BOLT and disappears downstream.

CUT TO:

Josh is climbing the waterfall below Victoria when he sees the ZIP LINE suddenly go limp. A glance downstream confirms his worst fear: the two REBREATHERS clipped to the end of the rope are being washed away. A shout from above.

FRANK (O.S.)
Josh! Grab the rope! We're losing the equipment!

Josh spots the rope in the pool below him. It's slowly being washed downstream. Josh glances up at Victoria, still hanging inverted fifty feet above him. He deliberates: does he help Victoria or save the equipment?

Josh makes his decision. He continues to climb up toward Victoria.

CUT TO:

Frank CURSES in despair as both REBREATHERS disappear downstream.

FRANK
Josh! Goddamn it!

CUT TO:

POV Victoria: Through the savage jets of water, she can see Josh's light approaching from below. She manages to pull her head out of the ferocious flow and into an airspace behind the waterfall. Gasping for breath, she calls down to Josh.

VICTORIA (HALF DROWNING)
Josh..! No!...!

Josh draws level with Victoria. He edges his way toward her, clinging perilously to a narrow ledge behind the falls. Water pounds his body. His foot slips and he only just manages to save himself. Josh glances down fearfully at the rocks, fifty feet below him.

Victoria pulls her head back up toward Frank, COUGHING and SPLUTTERING as the water pounds her face.

VICTORIA (PLEADING)
Frank! Let me go!

Frank gazes down at Victoria, a cold look on his face. Carl's grip tightens on the rope.

CARL
No! We have to save her!

Victoria SCREAMS at the top of her lungs as she sees Josh's light edging it's way toward her. Frank spots it too.

VICTORIA (TO FRANK)
Y...got to....et me go, Frank!
You'll...lose us both!

TIGHT on Frank as he coldly accepts her decision.

CUT TO:

Victoria swings her head back into the airspace behind the falls. Josh has reached the point of no return. He's reaching precariously toward Victoria. Eye contact is made.

JOSH
G-Give me your hand!

CUT TO:

Frank releases the rope. It is violently ripped from Carl's hands and disappears over the falls.

CUT TO:

Josh is left staring at the space where Victoria used to be.

JOSH
Noooooooooo!

CUT TO:

Victoria plunges 50 feet into the 'washing machine', a ROARING cascade below the falls. Buffeted from all sides, she is unceremoniously spat over the second waterfall.

BLAM! She hits the water hard and is immediately dragged down by the cascade of water. CRACK! Her head dashes against a rock below the surface. Blood clouds the water.

BADOOSH! Victoria is thrown over the second waterfall and dragged below again.

Beneath the water, Victoria struggles weakly toward the surface but cannot move. Looking down, she sees her SAFETY ROPE has jammed between two rocks, trapping her underwater.

A wave of euphoria washes over her as her hypoxic brain starts to shut down. Victoria desperately tugs on the rope, weaker and weaker until... BLIP! A final cloud of bubbles is exhaled.

CUT TO:

Josh is slipping and sliding his way back down the rocks toward the bottom of the falls.

JOSH
Victoria! Victoria!

He reaches the final 30ft drop. His flashlight reflects off Victoria's body beneath the surface. There is no quick way down.

SPLOOSH! Josh leaps off the cliff into the pool below. His light flicks through the water to reveal Victoria's lifeless body floating a few feet away.

She is suspended in mid-water, hanging by her safety rope. Josh tries to swim toward him but the current is too strong. He claws his way across the bottom, RAGING in anger and frustration. With a CRY of despair, Josh is forced to release himself. He floats back to the surface.

DISSOLVE TO:

A DREAM-LIKE SEQUENCE as the team react to Victoria's death:

Carl is hysterical. Sobbing uncontrollably. Punching the water in anger and frustration and CURSING Frank.

Crazy George looks utterly defeated. He crawls weakly to the edge of the river and collapses next to Frank.

Frank gazes down at Josh from the top of the falls.

Josh drags himself out of the water and clings to a rock, GASPING for breath. He stares up at his father. A murderous hatred in his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RIVER RAPIDS

VARIOUS SHOTS as the team stumble their way downstream, following the raging river.

Frank leads the way. A grim look on his face as he navigates the best way downstream. He is wearing the last remaining REBREATHER.

Carl flashes his light back toward Crazy George and Josh. He considers returning to help them, but is too exhausted. He staggers downstream past Frank, his face set in stone.

Crazy George is in a bad way. Josh has to support him as he stumbles across the rocks. Frank waits for them.

Frank helps drag Crazy George across a set of rapids. He reaches back to offer Josh a helping hand. Josh refuses. A moment of tension as they confront each other. Josh pushes past him, into the darkness.

Four lights, continuing steadily downstream until finally...

INT. SUMP BELOW CHIMNEY

The tunnel ends abruptly at another sump: a shallow pool where the river disappears beneath a cliff. A small entrance beneath the surface marks the continuation of the underwater cave. The team wearily pull themselves out of the water and crawl up the muddy shoreline.

Everyone is physically and emotionally exhausted. A depressed silence engulfs the group. Josh gently eases Crazy George to the floor. Crazy George curls himself up in a ball, feverish and MOANING in pain. Josh lifts his head clear of the mud.

JOSH (ANGRY TO FRANK)
He can't go any further. He needs oxygen, Goddamn it!

Frank lifts the REBREATHER off his back and shoots Josh an accusing look.

FRANK
I already told you. This is all we have left. Now.

JOSH (BRISTLING)
What's that supposed to mean?

FRANK
(beat) It means, we need it to get out.

Frank flashes his light around. A dry tunnel leads upwards.

FRANK
Up there. We'll be safe up there.

JOSH
From what? A nuclear fucking attack?

CARL (EXCITED)
Over here!

Frank staggers forward. Carl's light has revealed several FOOTPRINTS in the entrance to the tunnel. Carl begins to SOB with relief and excitement.

CARL
Footprints! This must be the way out!

JOSH
A-Are you sure?

Carl races back and starts shaking Josh.

CARL
We're getting out of here! You hear? We're gonna live!

Carl staggers drunkenly back up into the tunnel.

CARL
Oh thank-you. Thank-you Jesus thank-you, thank-you, thank-you...

Frank continues to examine the footprints, a grim look on his face.

JOSH (TO FRANK)
You look disappointed. Pissed off someone beat you to it?

Frank glares at Josh. Then turns his attention to Crazy George.

FRANK
Help me get him somewhere dry.

Frank hauls Crazy George to his feet. He gazes at Frank in a half-conscious daze.

CRAZY GEORGE
S-Sorry to be such a b-burden, Frank.

Frank smiles sadly at his old friend.

INT. CHIMNEY

Frank and Josh drag Crazy George up the narrow tunnel. The river has become a DISTANT ROAR below them. They stagger out of the tunnel and emerge inside a tall, dry, chimney-like room.

Carl is kneeling in the center of the Chimney. Josh staggers forward, flashing his light around the walls.

CARL
Don't bother. There's no way out.

JOSH
How can you be sure?

Carl directs the beam of his light toward the back of the cave.

Josh reels in horror: The skeletal remains of TWO DIVERS lay on the floor, their bones held together by their WETSUITS.

The bodies are arranged to suggest a violent struggle took place. DRIED BLOOD stains the wall and floor. One of the diver's skulls has been SMASHED apart by the others STAGE CYLINDER.

JOSH (HORRIFIED WHISPER)
The missing divers.

CARL (RESIGNED)
We're all going to fucking die.

INT. CHIMNEY

Frank is on the far side of the cavern, busy checking over the remaining REBREATHER. His FLASHLIGHT casts ghostly shadows over the cavern walls.

Crazy George lays in Josh's arms, MOANING in a feverish sleep. Carl glances down at his cracked TAG HEUER DIVE WATCH. Broken now.

JOSH
Why'd you keep looking at that?

CARL
I'm wondering when it stopped.

JOSH
It's been four days now. It'll just be getting dark outside.

CARL
I should be flying home right now.

Josh and Carl hear the faint wisps of COLERIDGE echoing around the cave.

CARL (URGENT WHISPER)
He's out of his mind, Josh. Just listen to him. We should have checked out those tunnels. We could have been out of here by now, instead of being forced on some suicide mission...

FRANK (O.S. WHISPERED)
In Xanadu...did Kubla Khan...

JOSH
He's convinced there's dry cave on the other side of the sump.

FRANK (O.S. WHISPERED)
A stately pleasure dome decree...

CARL (SNEERING)
Yeah? Well buddy-breathing through, two at a time is insane.

FRANK) (O.S. WHISPERED)
Where Alph the scared river, ran...

JOSH
You got a better plan? (beat) We can make it. If it's not too far...

FRANK (O.S. WHISPERED)
Down to a sunless sea.

CARL
And what if there is no air pocket, Josh? What then?

Josh glances toward the macabre SKELETONS. And shudders.

TIGHT on Carl: he can't take his eyes off the remaining REBREATHER.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CHIMNEY - NEXT MORNING

Frank sleeps, tucked inside a rocky crevasse. He looks like he's part of the cave walls. Josh shakes him awake, a concerned look on his face.

FRANK
What is it?

INT. SUMP BELOW CHIMNEY

Frank and Josh stand by the water. The last REBREATHER is missing. No sign of Carl.

FRANK
Son of a bitch!

JOSH
Maybe he's scouting ahead?

Frank flashes him a look.

JOSH
The tunnel could choke? Then he'd have to head back.

FRANK
Either way, we lose.

JOSH
What are we going to do?

Frank gazes around the cave. Then marches back up to Chimney.

FRANK
We find another way out.

INT. CHIMNEY

Frank sits in a depressed trance, CLICKING his fading FLASHLIGHT on and off repeatedly as he stares at the SKELETAL REMAINS of the two divers.

Josh watches him from a distance as he tends to Crazy George. Crazy George's condition has worsened overnight. He lays in Josh's arms, barely conscious.

CRAZY GEORGE (DELIRIOUS)
F-Frank?

JOSH
It's Josh.

Crazy George suddenly starts to CRY.

CRAZY GEORGE
I-I can't move my legs anymore.

Josh says nothing. He glances over at his father.

CUT TO:

Suddenly, Frank's eyes narrow as he notices something unusual about the SKELETONS. Scrambling like a crab, he clambers over the rocks to investigate.

CUT TO:

Josh scrutinizes Frank's unusual behavior from a distance.

CRAZY GEORGE (SCARED WHISPER)
L-Luko was here. Last night. I reckon he came for me, Josh...

JOSH
Don't talk like that. Try and rest.

Crazy George suddenly grabs Josh.

CRAZY GEORGE
Don't let them...come for me, Josh.

JOSH
Who?

CRAZY GEORGE (TERRIFIED)
Them...

Crazy George points into the dark. Macabre shadows dance across the walls. Sinister shapes Josh's imagination prefers to ignore. Josh shudders.

JOSH
Nothing's going to hurt you. I promise.

CUT TO:

Crouching down, Frank examines a curious DARK STAIN on one of the SKULLS. His fingers come away dirty. He SNIFFS his fingers and casts his beam toward the ceiling.

CUT TO:

Crazy George lapses into unconsciousness. Josh checks to see he is still breathing, struggling to fight back his tears. Suddenly, Frank looms over him, a manic look on his face. He throws the SKULL down into Josh's lap. Josh jumps.

FRANK (INTENSE)
A Samurai prepares himself each day for his own death. That's what makes him invincible.

Josh gazes up at him, a worried expression on his face. Frank suddenly grins at him.

FRANK
C'mon. We're getting out of here.

JOSH
H-How?

FRANK
We'll float up through the ceiling.

Josh suddenly looks scared. His father is clearly insane. Frank wipes the DARK STAIN off the skull with his finger and waves it in front of Josh's face. Josh wrinkles his nose.

JOSH (DISGUSTED)
What the fuck is that?

FRANK
Bat guano. Follow me.

CUT TO:

Frank and Josh focus their beams high on the ceiling of CHIMNEY.

JOSH
You're saying there's a tunnel up there?

FRANK
Yeah. Trust me.

JOSH
We lost all the vertical gear. How are we going to climb up?

Frank hands Josh a large BOULDER from the floor of the cave. Then grabs one for himself.

FRANK
We don't climb. We float.

INT. SUMP BELOW CHIMNEY

Frank and Josh carry the boulders down toward the sump. BADOOSH! Frank heaves his boulder into the water and watches it sink toward the entrance of the underwater tunnel.

JOSH
You're going to dam the river?

FRANK
We'll flood the cavern. The water will carry us right up to the ceiling.

JOSH
That'll take forever!

Frank is already on his way back up to Chimney.

FRANK
You got something better to do?

SPLOSH! Josh throws his rock into the water and reluctantly trudges after his father.

DISSOLVE TO:

VARIOUS SHOTS as Frank and Josh carry rock after rock down toward the river. It's backbreaking work.

Josh seems determined to select bigger rocks than Frank.

WETSUITS are removed as the sweat starts to pour down their bodies.

Josh crawls over to check Crazy George's condition.

Frank collapses at the edge of the sump and starts GULPING down the muddy water like a parched beast. Josh gazes down at him in revulsion.

Frank gazes guiltily at Crazy George as he staggers past him: but he's too focussed on the task at hand to stop.

Frank and Josh are soon caked in mud. They look like primal beings, barely human.

Josh starts GULPING down the muddy water along with his father.

The pile of rocks continues to grown until...

SPLOSH! Josh tosses the last rock in place and collapses into the mud next to Frank. A massive pile of boulders now seals the underwater cave.

FRANK (GRIM SATISFACTION)
It's working.

Frank shines his fading beam toward the shoreline. The water is already creeping up toward them. Josh rolls over onto his back and WHOOPS for joy.

JOSH (LAUGHING)
Not bad.(beat) For an old man.

Frank's face almost cracks a smile. Almost. Frank offers Josh a shaky handshake. Josh is about to grasp his hand when...

BADOOSH! The river SMASHES it's way through the dam, scattering their efforts downstream. Josh gazes in horror as his world collapses.

JOSH
No. Nonononononononono!

Josh sags to the floor and starts to SOB. He's finally reached his breaking point. Frank gazes at the cave walls, a resigned look on his face. Suddenly he bursts into HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER. Josh explodes into a fierce rage.

JOSH
Goddamn you! You made me believe!

Josh starts hurling rock after rock at the uncaring cave walls. Frank can't stop laughing. Josh starts throwing stones at him instead. It only makes Frank laugh more.

JOSH
(continuing)
You...made...me...believe!

Josh collapses onto the floor, sobbing uncontrollably. Frank eventually calms down. He approaches his son, wiping the tears from his eyes.

FRANK
C'mon, get up.

JOSH
Why did I ever listen to you? Why? We're never getting out of here. Why can't you just admit that?

FRANK
We are getting out of here.

JOSH
No we're not! And that's okay! We fucking tried! We gave it our best shot!

FRANK
Quit whining. Engage rational thought.

JOSH (FINALLY LOSING IT)
Fuck you!

Josh hurls another rock at Frank. This time he really means business. Frank ducks as the rock SMASHES against the wall.

JOSH
Fuck you, fuck Carl and FUCK THIS GODDAMN CAVE!
(screaming)
FUCK IT! FUCK-IT-ALL!!!

Josh rolls onto his back and lies there GASPING for breath. Frank watches him dispassionately.

FRANK
Finished?

JOSH
Just let me die. That's all I want. Just let me die.

FRANK
We don't have time.

Frank disappears into the darkness, leaving Josh in the mud. After a few moments, Josh starts CRYING. Great wracking SOBS shudder through his body, leaving him a quivering mess, devoid of all humanity. Josh closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

Josh open his eyes. They are caked in mud, tears and sweat. He sits up and gazes around him, unsure of his surroundings. His vision blurs as a DIM LIGHT falls across his face. He watches the light approach. Holds out his hand in fear.

JOSH (TERRIFIED)
L-Luko?

FRANK
You ain't dead yet.

It's Frank. Carrying a rock toward the water. SPLOSH! Frank heaves the rock into the sump and turns back toward Chimney. Josh can see a fresh pile of rocks in the bottom of the sump: Frank has been busy rebuilding the dam.

Josh staggers to his feet. His vision WHIRLS as he staggers after his father. He's in a state of nervous exhaustion.

DISSOLVE TO:

A HALLUCINOGENIC NIGHTMARE SEQUENCE as Josh helps Frank re-build the dam. The COLERIDGE POEM repeats itself over and over, laying siege to Josh's mind.

JOSH(INNER MONOLOGUE)
In Xanadu...did Kubla Khan...a stately pleasure dome decree...where Alph...the sacred river ran...down to a sunless sea...

The tunnel WHIRLS in and out of focus as he carries each rock down to the sump.

POV Josh: the rock TRANSFORMS into a SCHOOL BOOK: "DAD'S DIVE" by Josh Mcguire aged seven. A hand-drawn picture of a diver, with Frank's NOTES scribbled in the margin.

The COLERIDGE POEM becomes an annoying nursery rhyme, building in intensity over the following...

Frank gazes up at Josh. Josh lifts the rock and SMASHES it into Frank's face. SPLOSH! The water shatters as Frank's reflection disappears.

Luko's reflection appears in its place. Then Victoria's. They are both SCREAMING as they drown. Josh reaches for them just as...

Frank's reflection returns. He reaches toward Josh.

FLASHBACK to 25 YEAR-OLD FRANK, dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, picking up 5 YEAR-OLD JOSH and playing "AIR-GUITAR" with him while an AC-DC TUNE blasts in the background.

Frank spins Josh around and around in the brilliant sunshine. They are in their back garden. Josh is LAUGHING as they spin faster and faster. Josh's MUM (20's) can be seen in the background, barbecuing. Her eyes are filled with love. Then concern. She's pointing into Josh's PADDLING POOL.

Luko and Victoria's lifeless bodies float below the surface.

The young Frank suddenly starts SHAKING Josh like a rag doll. His face a mask of ANGER. Suddenly, his face transforms into the DEATH MASK worn by the Shaman. Josh starts to SCREAM as...

CUT TO:

REAL TIME: Frank shakes Josh awake.

FRANK
..ear what I said? We've got to get out of here. Now!

Josh blinks and gazes around him. He's standing in waist-deep water. The light from their FLASHLIGHTS has dimmed considerably: the batteries are almost dead.

The dam is completed. The water level has already risen several feet and is working its way into the Chimney tunnel.

Josh and Frank are unrecognizable: covered from head to foot in mud, their fingers and faces cut and bloody.

They collapse into each others arms, sharing a significant moment of accomplishment and achievement.

Then they stagger back up toward Chimney.

INT. CHIMNEY

Crazy George sits slumped against the far wall, his head resting against his chest. Josh races toward him and excitedly shakes him awake.

JOSH
George! We have to go now...

Josh freezes. His hand comes away covered in blood. George's eyes flutter open.

CRAZY GEORGE (BARELY AUDIBLE)
So c-c-cold...so v-very cold.

Josh lifts Crazy George's arm. His DIVE KNIFE clatters to the floor. Josh realizes in horror that he's used the blade to open his own wrists.

JOSH
What have you done? We were getting out of here! What have you done!

Frank races over. He coldly asses the situation.

CRAZY GEORGE
Reckon I'd s-save you the trouble, F-Frank.

Frank nods and kneels next to his friend, holding his hand.

CRAZY GEORGE (SMILING)
Don't look so...sad, Josh...You can't...get buried...deeper...

The sentence hangs in the air. Crazy George is dead.

A ROAR of water. Frank turns and flashes his light towards the tunnel. The river is already pouring into the chimney. In seconds they are waist deep.

Josh and Frank stand in silence and watch Crazy George's body disappear beneath the water.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
You have no control over this. Accept it.

Frank and Josh stare long and hard at each other as the water continues to rise.

Then Frank starts grabbing their remaining items of DIVE EQUIPMENT: MASKS, FINS.

A wave of water hits them. They start spinning around the cavern, carried higher up the walls.

The ceiling suddenly looms close: sure enough, a small exit tunnel can be seen above their heads.

Frank reaches up and makes a grab for the ceiling. He can't reach. He tries again. Fails.

FRANK
It's no good. I-I can't reach it.

Suddenly, Frank's FLASHLIGHT flickers and dies.

FRANK
Pass me your light!

As Josh passes Frank the final FLASHLIGHT, Frank's eyes narrow in concern. The dull beam reveals a black TIDAL MARK around the walls of the chimney, left by the falling water.

FRANK (SCARED WHISPER)
The dam's giving way.

JOSH
H-How can you tell?

FRANK
Tidal mark. The water's dropping.

The same thought crosses their minds at the same time: they reach up toward the ceiling. It's already further away. Suddenly, a grotesque GURGLING SOUND fills the air. In the center of the Chimney, a mass of floating debris suddenly starts to spin.

Josh sees it too: a BLACK WHIRLPOOL is steadily forming around them as the water subsides.

FRANK
Quickly!

Josh swims over to Frank, who wedges himself into a crack in the cave wall. Josh clambers up onto his father's body and manages to grab an outcrop of rock on the ceiling.

Clinging to the ceiling like Spiderman, Josh inches his way across the roof and up into the escape tunnel. He reaches down toward his father. Frank is already fighting to stay afloat as the whirlpool spins him around the cavern.

Josh goes to grab his father. Misses. Grabs again. Just manages to clutch his hand. Neither of them speak. A simple look indicates the sudden shift of power.

Josh hauls his father up out of the water. They gaze down as the water in the chimney gets NOISILY flushed away.

Then their final FLASHLIGHT flickers out. Total darkness. A long unbearable silence.

FRANK (DEADPAN)
Christ. It's blacker than the inside of a dog.

After a few seconds, Josh starts to CHUCKLE at Frank's line. Then he LAUGHS out loud. This causes Frank to burst out LAUGHING. Their hysterical gales of laughter fill the cave, ECHOING off the walls.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT: BATS BELFRY ENTRANCE TUNNEL

TIGHT on Josh's face as he crawls along a narrow tunnel. The only light now comes from his cheap INDIGLO DIVE WATCH. Josh pauses and points his watch back down the tunnel. Frank's face eventually appears in the dim BLUE GLOW.

JOSH (PANTING)
We...we can...rest here. There's not much battery left...

Frank nods understanding. The light snaps out. Suddenly, we hear Frank SNIFFING the air.

JOSH
What is it?

FRANK
Fresh air!

After a few seconds, Josh realizes he can dimly see his father.

JOSH
Is that...daylight?

The sound of them both SCRABBLING forward in the dark. GLIMPSES of elbows, hands, then their faces appear, as the light in the tunnel grows steadily brighter.

INT. BAT'S BELFRY.

Josh reaches a small body tube in the cave wall. Dim light can be seen through the tunnel. Josh SHIVERS in delight as a gust of wind HOWLS through the hole, ruffling his hair. Josh closes his eyes and INHALES deeply. He smiles at his Father.

FRANK
After you, son...

Josh crawls into the hole.

INT. BAT'S BELFRY - DAY

Josh pulls himself out of the body tube and gazes in disbelief.

An enormous dome-shaped cavern, the size of an Olympic stadium. Sunlight pours in through a skylight in the ceiling, 200 feet above their heads. A tantalizing glimpse of blue sky as the Godly shafts of light pierce the gloom. Swallows and bats SWOOP around Josh, dancing in and out of the sunlight.

Josh flashes his light around the walls and ceiling: they are sheer, smooth and impossible to climb.

JOSH (DEVASTATED)
There's no way out.

Frank appears next to him. He notices Josh's expression of bitter disappointment.

FRANK
C'mon. Let's check out the other side.

They stumble forward into the light.

CUT TO:

Josh and Frank scramble up the pile of debris that's formed directly below the skylight. As they clear the top they freeze:

A M4-A2 SHERMAN TANK lays at the bottom of the slope, resting on its side. It's covered in 60 years of bat guano but otherwise it's perfectly intact.

FRANK
Now there's something you don't see every day.

They scramble down to investigate.

FRANK
There was a tank battalion stationed here during the war.(beat) We must be close to the ocean.

Josh glances up at the skylight far above them.

JOSH
Christ. D'you think anyone survived the fall?

Frank HEAVES open the turret hatch. The SKELETAL REMAINS of a crew member falls out. The SKULL rolls toward Josh.

FRANK
Guess not.

Frank reaches inside the tank and pulls out a pack of S-RATIONS. He throws the pack to Josh with a big grin on his face.

FRANK
Hungry?

CUT TO:

A ROARING FIRE burns brightly in the center of the cavern, illuminating the walls and casting a cheery glow. Frank douses another FALLEN BRANCH with gasoline from the Tank's JERRY CAN and hurls it onto the flames. WHOOMPTH!

Josh sits on top of the tank, wolfing down a bar of CHOCOLATE. He SIGHS at the indescribable pleasure of each mouthful as he basks in the heat from the fire.

JOSH (MOUTH FULL)
This. Is. Fucking. Amazing.

Josh glances up at the skylight. Billowing smoke rises up into the blue sky.

JOSH
You think someone will see us?

FRANK
Hope can be a dangerous thing. We find our own way out.

Josh gazes at the cave walls.

JOSH
It's almost like it's teasing us.

FRANK
Caves do that.

JOSH
Yeah? This one's really starting to take the piss.

FRANK
Don't take it personally. We're here, now. And that's all that matters. Until we accept that, we're never getting out of here.

INT. BAT'S BELFRY - NIGHT

Darkness. A dim BLUE LIGHT bathes Josh's face. He snaps awake and gazes around him, a confused look on his face.

JOSH
D-Dad?

FRANK
What?

Josh spots the STARS and MOON shining down through the skylight.

JOSH
Nothing. Just checking.

Josh gazes up at the stars. After a while he closes his eyes.

INT. SHINGLE SLOPE. BAT'S BELFRY - DAY

Josh's improvised TORCH splits the darkness. Narrow strips of uniform, soaked in gasoline and wrapped around a RIFLE BUTT.

Josh is searching the shadows at the far side of the cavern. Frank's torch can be seen in the distance. Early morning sunlight pours down through the skylight. Josh arrives at the bottom of a steep shingle slope and scrambles up to investigate.

INT. BELFRY EXIT TUNNEL

At the top of the slope, Josh finds a small tunnel in the cavern wall. It leads steadily downwards.

JOSH
Dad! Over here!

INT. BODY TUBES

The tunnel soon narrows. Sweat beads Josh's brow as he squeezes his way down the tight body tube. The torch SINGES his hair and almost burns his face.

Josh turns back toward his father. Frank is crawling through the tunnel a few feet behind him.

JOSH
Listen!

INT. CONNECTING SUMP.

The sound of RUNNING WATER. Josh's head pops out of a small hole in the ceiling of a medium-sized cavern. He throws his torch to the floor before gracefully easing himself down.

Josh stands on the shoreline of a small lake. The river GUSHES out of the deep pool and disappears down a half-flooded tunnel. Josh eagerly starts exploring the room while Frank struggles to get down from the hole.

CRUMP! Frank enters the room far less gracefully than Josh.

Josh's torch reflects off an object laying on the muddy shore: Carl's REBREATHER. Josh bends down to inspect it. Both GAUGES read "EMPTY".

JOSH
Carl's.

Frank nods grimly. Shining their torches ahead of them, they cautiously enter the tunnel.

INT. DEBRIS TUNNEL

Josh and Frank wade through the waist deep water, following the sluggish river. Their torches reflect against the obsidian black walls.

Josh wrinkles his nose in disgust. Floating in the water around them are dozens of DROWNED RATS. Josh pushes them aside and continues onward.

The tunnel becomes filled with debris that has been washed down by the river: TREE BRANCHES, VEGETATION and the rotting carcasses of several DEAD ANIMALS. Josh starts recognizing REBREATHER PARTS and DIVE EQUIPMENT, smashed and broken along the rocks lining the tunnel.

INT. DANTE'S NIGHTMARE

Rounding a corner, the tunnel ends abruptly in a small room filled with half-submerged rocks. The rocks act as a drain: collecting any debris that's been flushed into the cave. Josh covers his nose and fights the urge to retch: the stinking effluent has formed a festering lake. A MOAN in the darkness causes them to spin around.

Carl sits SHIVERING in the darkness. He is almost unrecognizable: his face is covered in blood, mud and bruises. Madness rages in his eyes as he raises his hands to protect himself from the harsh glare of their torches.

Half-eaten RAT CARCASSES litter the shoreline around him. A pile of dead FLASHLIGHTS lay discarded at his side. Carl staggers toward them, as if in a drunken stupor.

CARL
Y-You came for me. I-I knew you would...

Carl lifts his hand toward the torch and caresses the flame.

CARL (HYPNOTISED)
So...beautiful. Beyond price. I'd have given...anything. Everything. Just to see again.

Josh pulls the flame away from him.

CARL
H-How long have I been in the dark? A week? A month?

Frank and Josh exchange a glance.

JOSH
You left us three days ago.

Carl's face registers confusion. Then fear. He slumps to the floor and starts to CRY.

CARL
You...have to help me. We have to...help each other...help each other get out of here...

Carl grabs Josh's leg. Frank observes, stony-faced.

CARL
I only went to...scout ahead, Josh.
I was...going to come back for you.
But the current was...too strong.

Josh kicks Carl away from him.

CARL
You...you have to believe me. Ask
the others...if you don't believe
me...ask the others...

JOSH
What others?

CARL (MANIC WHISPER)
Them!

Carl backs up against the cave wall, SHIVERING in fear. He casts a terrified glance toward the far side of the cavern.

CARL (TERRIFIED)
They're here...All of them...

Following Carl's gaze, Josh and Frank shine their torches into the dark reaches of the chamber.

It's a scene from Dante's own nightmare.

Scattered among the debris are the hideously mangled remains of Judes, Luko, Crazy George and Victoria.

The river has pummeled them into a twisted mass of skin and bone. Their lifeless eyes stare accusingly at them. Carl lies in the mud, ranting at the darkness

CARL (MUTTERING INCOHERENTLY)
Now...we're all here, I should
call....the office...

Frank ignores Carl. He wades toward Judes and starts tearing her REBREATHER apart, so he can salvage both her CYLINDERS.

CARL
Tell...Tell them we're delayed. You
brought the phone with you? I have
a meeting in just over an hour. We
should arrange a press conference?
Send photos...

Frank coldly sifts through Judes DIVE RIG. He finds four CYLUME CHEMICAL LIGHT STICKS, tucked behind her WRIST SLATE.

He coldly reads the words he had written onto her slate: "TRUST ME!". Frank throws the LIGHT STICKS over to Josh.

FRANK
C'mon. We're getting out of here.

Carl crawls over to Josh and grabs his hand.

CARL
Take...take me with you. Please.

Josh pulls his hand away..

CARL
You are not to leave me here! I demand you take me with you!

Josh and Frank cast a final glance down at Carl. They look at each other. Then turn and walk down the tunnel.

CARL (O.S.)
Josh! Josh!

INT. CONNECTING SUMP

Frank and Josh are kneeling by the shoreline, fitting Judes cylinders into the REBREATHER.

FRANK
I reckon we're only a couple of miles from the ocean...

Frank nods toward the water.

FRANK
We can buddy breathe through the sump. Follow the river. That will lead us out...

Suddenly, a strange look crosses Frank's face. He glances down in confusion and fear.

JOSH
Are you okay?

FRANK
Oh...fuck...

Josh reels back in horror. The tip of a DIVE KNIFE is sticking out of Frank's ribcage. Frank slumps to the floor.

Carl kneels behind Frank holding the bloodied knife. He lifts it toward Josh's throat.

CARL
Give me those fucking lights...

Carl grabs the CYLUME LIGHT STICKS off Josh.

CARL
We...we can still get out of here...alive, Josh. You and me. Now we have these...I want you to fit....fit the oxygen tank...

Josh stares down at his father's body in shock. Carl pushes the knife hard against Josh's throat. A sliver of BLOOD appears.

CARL (SCREAMING)
DO IT!

Josh nods obediently. He reaches down and grabs the OXYGEN CYLINDER. Lifts it into the REBREATHER.

CARL (A GLANCE AT FRANK)
That...son of a bitch...had it coming, Josh. He'd have...killed us all. Even you. You realize that...don't you? I was acting in...self defense...

Josh slowly nods in agreement.

CARL
Life's...not a dress rehearsal, Josh. Sometimes...you...you have to...

Suddenly, Frank MOANS. Carl's eyes narrow in concern. He lifts the BURNING TORCH to take a closer look.

JOSH (COLD)
Seize the day?

Josh cracks open the OXYGEN CYLINDER VALVE.

WHOOOMPH! A SHEET OF FLAME engulfs Carl. Carl is on fire. He reels backwards SCREAMING in pain.

Carl flails around the cavern floor in agony, his skin blistering.

FSHHHHHH! A cloud of steam as Carl rolls into the sump to douse the flames. Carl surfaces, gazing around in fear and confusion just as...

BADOOSH! Josh leaps onto him in a primal, brutal fury.

VARIOUS QUICK CUTS as they roll through the muddy water, reduced to animals in pure, savage survival mode.

Biting. Clawing. Gouging. It's ugly. Visceral. Almost unbearable to watch.

Carl sees the DIVE KNIFE laying in the mud where he dropped it. He crawls toward it. Josh drags him deeper back into the sump.

Carl SCREAMS in fear, clawing the mud. He KICKS Josh in the head. Josh releases him.

Carl grabs Josh by the throat and forces his head under the water.

SMACK! Josh's knee thuds up into Carl's ribcage, winding him.

Carl slumps into the water, GASPING for breath. He turns around just as...

CRACK! Josh smacks Carl in the face with the rock. Carl drops to the floor.

Josh SCREAMS in rage as he leaps onto Carl and starts pounding his head with the rock.

JOSH
PUT...YOUR...FUCKING...NAME...ON...
THIS!

Suddenly, blood spatters Josh's face. Josh gazes down in horror and drops the rock. He collapses to the ground and crawls through the mud to check if Frank is still breathing.

Josh starts RESCUE BREATHING. Frank's gaping chest wound HISSES noisily with each breath. Frank eventually COUGHS up blood and opens his eyes. Gritting his teeth in pain, he reaches toward Josh.

FRANK
The-the rebreather?

Josh glances toward the sump. The REBREATHER is smouldering by the water's edge: the oxygen cylinder still on fire. Josh shakes his head sadly.

Frank MOANS in despair and pain. Josh uses the knife to cut a strip from his WETSUIT. He starts padding Frank's wound. Frank gazes toward Carl's unconscious body.

FRANK (IN PAIN)
Is he...dead?

JOSH
I-I don't think so.

Frank suddenly grips Josh's hand and looks him dead in the eye.

FRANK
Kill him. Do it. Quickly. Before he wakes up.

Josh considers this. Then heaves Frank toward the sump.

JOSH
Let's just get out of here.

Josh pulls the DILUENT CYLINDER from the smouldering remains of the REBREATHER and clips it onto his harness.

FRANK
T-There's not enough gas for...both of us. Take it, Josh. Leave me and...ahhhhh!

Frank cries out in pain and fear.

JOSH (FIGHTING BACK TEARS)
I'm-I'm not leaving you here, Dad.

Frank gazes around at the cave walls. He's suddenly fighting for breath.

FRANK
Listen...listen to me...You have to...trust me on this. Trust the cave..follow the river. It'll lead you out...

JOSH
It'll lead <u>us</u> out.

Josh drags Frank out into the water. As he pulls Frank's mask into place, a GROAN from the shadows causes Josh to look up.

Carl is crawling through the mud toward the dying torch. His face is covered in blood and burns. He reaches for the flame.

Just as it flickers out.

CARL
No! Noooooooooo!

Carl is plunged into eternal darkness.

INT. UNDERWATER CHAMBERS

An eerie YELLOW GLOW fills the underwater sump as Josh CRACKS open a LIGHT STICK.

Frank and Josh bounce their way down the underwater cliff wall, into the depths of the sump. As they hit the sandy bottom, they see a small tunnel disappearing into the dark.

PFFT! Josh cracks open the DILUENT CYLINDER and snatches a breath directly from the valve. Bubbles EXPLODE and POP around him. He offers the cylinder to Frank, cracking the valve open so he can take a breath. Then Josh grabs Frank's harness and pulls him into the tunnel.

Josh swims directly above Frank, orchestrating the task-loading job of BUDDY-BREATHING from the DILUENT CYLINDER, while pulling them both along the wall.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Open. Breathe. Close. Pull. Open.
Breathe. Close. Pull. Open.
Breathe...

After a while, the routine becomes fluid, like a beautifully choreographed ballet. Two people, working as one.

VARIOUS SHOTS: The tunnel soon narrows into a tight restriction. Josh swims through, then reaches back and pulls Frank after him.

A lazy current carries them down a widening passageway.

They drift through a huge chamber: spectacular speleothems connecting the ceiling to the floor.

Frank's RATTLED BREATHING is growing steadily weaker as they continue.

Josh and Frank ascend up an underwater cliff wall.

They surface inside a tiny air bell: only six inches of airspace. Josh tilts his head back and gulps down several DEEP BREATHS.

JOSH (BREATHLESS)
You...You got water in your
mask..Here...let me...

Josh removes Frank's mask. Frank lolls, unconscious.

JOSH
Dad? Dad!

Josh has to SHAKE his father back to consciousness. Frank blinks, spits blood and gazes around weakly.

JOSH
You gotta stay with me!

FRANK (WEAK)
N-no more. Please. Leave me here...It...hurts so bad...

Josh drags his father's mask back in place.

JOSH
Just hang on. It can't be much further now...

Josh CRACKS open another LIGHT STICK with his teeth. They descend.

They enter another beautifully decorated room, breaking through the shimmering HALOCLINE, from fresh water to salt water.

Josh glances up: their exhalation bubbles break the glassy surface of an air-filled chamber. Josh kicks weakly toward the surface.

INT. DRY CAVE

Josh drags Frank high up the shoreline and collapses into the thick black clay covering the floor. Josh gazes around: another vast and featureless air-filled cavern: his LIGHT STICK barely pierces the dark.

JOSH
Hello!

Josh sags wearily as his voice echoes into the far distance. The cavern is huge. No obvious way forward. Frank suddenly COUGHS up more blood. He's struggling for breath and SHIVERING in pain. Josh gazes down at him numbly.

Josh shuffles over and opens Frank's WETSUIT ZIP to inspect his chest wound. His eyes widen in fear as he removes the blood-soaked dressing. Frank's lost a lot of blood: a red river trickles down the shoreline. Frank MOANS in pain.

FRANK
J-Josh. L-L-Leave me!

JOSH
Shhh! Easy now. (obviously lying) Can you feel it? There's a breeze coming from somewhere. We must be close.

Josh staggers to his feet. He CRACKS the third CYLUME STICK and hands Frank the old one.

JOSH
I'm going to scout ahead. (smiling grimly) Don't worry. I won't get lost.

Josh wades his way along the shoreline, his feet SUCKING and OOZING into the knee-deep clay. After a hundred yards, something makes him stop and look back. Josh suddenly looks very frightened. He retraces his footsteps to find...

Frank has gone. Josh follows the trail of blood down to the waters edge.

JOSH
Dad!

Frank is laying with his face in the mud, desperately trying to suck water into his lungs in an attempt to kill himself. Josh races over and pulls Frank's face clear of the water. Frank RAGES in anger and frustration as Josh drags him back up the shoreline.

FRANK
Unnng! Goddamn it! Kill me! Do this for me. Josh. Kill me. Please... You have to...have to...

Frank suddenly reaches up and touches Josh's face.

FRANK (INTENSE)
...Forgive me...

JOSH
What for?

Frank lapses into unconsciousness. His head lolls against Josh's knee, only inches from the water. Josh stares down at his father, shaking in fright.

Suddenly, Josh grabs Frank's head and holds it above the water.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Do it! Do it! Do it!...

Josh stares at his hand, transfixed as it inches Frank's mouth down into the water. The water is about to cover Frank's nose when...

Josh pulls Frank's head back up into his lap. He throws back his head and WEEPS openly, cradling his father's head in his arms. He can't bring himself do it.

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG CONTINUOUS SHOT as we follow a set of muddy footprints along the shoreline of the river. Next to the footprints can be seen the deep imprint of an object being dragged. The footprints go on for what seems like miles. We hear a MANTRA echoing across the distant walls. Spoken lyrics from an old song.

JOSH (O.S.)
"It ain't easy...Livin' free...
Season ticket on a one-way
ride....Askin' Nothing...leave me
be...Takin' everything in my
stride..."...Shit...How...How's...
the next bit go?

We follow the footprints over a huge DEBRIS SLOPE. Then down the other side, back into the river.

JOSH (O.S)
"Don't need reason...Don't need
rhyme...Ain't nothing that I'd
rather do..." Goddamn it!. Help me
out...This was your...stupid
song...

Finally, the dim yellow glow of Josh's LIGHT STICK can be seen in the distance. Josh staggers along the knee-deep river, his father hoisted across his back in a fireman's carry. The DILUENT CYLINDER drags in the water behind them. It's backbreaking work.

Josh is mumbling to himself, close to a complete emotional and physical breakdown. The sound of a WATERFALL can be heard directly ahead.

JOSH (O.S.)
"Going down...Party time...My
friends are going to be there
too..I'm on a..."

Josh emerges into...

INT. CRYSTAL PALACE.

A cavern of magnificent wonder and beauty. The chamber is finely decorated with millions of delicate CALCITE STRAWS, hanging from the ceiling. Josh's LIGHT STICK reflects the exquisite crystal formations that cover every inch of the walls. A fine mist fills the air.

The river disappears into a vast circular pit in the floor of the cave. Around the pit, several other rivers cascade out of the cavern walls to form one great one big circular waterfall plunging into infinity.

JOSH (HUSHED WHISPER)
"...Highway to hell".

Josh gently lowers his father to the edge of a shallow pool. Then stumbles to the edge of the precipice and gazes down. He throws his fading CYLUME STICK over the edge and watches it disappear into the darkness.

A bottomless pit. No way down. No tunnel leading on.

Josh CRACKS open the final LIGHT STICK and falls to his knees. Josh smiles as he gazes around the cavern, finally accepting his reality. His face reveals a peaceful reverence. He's breathing the cave in. Feeling it. Finally getting it.

DISSOLVE TO:

Josh sits in a shallow pool overlooking the falls. Frank is cradled in Josh's arms, unconscious. Josh gazes around at the cavern. Then leans over and kisses his father.

Frank's eyes flicker open. He gazes up at Josh, a serene look on his face. Frank closes his eyes. Then nods, once.

Josh gently lowers his father's head beneath the surface of the water.

There's no panic. No drama. Josh watches his father die as if it's the most natural thing in the world. After a few seconds it's over.

JOSH (WHISPER)
I love you, Dad.

Josh closes his eyes. Darkness engulfs us.

DISSOLVE TO:

Josh stands confidently at the edge of the cliff clutching the DILUENT CYLINDER and the LIGHT STICK. He turns and takes a final look at his father's body, floating lifeless in the pool. Josh steels himself, turns and steps out into the darkness.

INT. FREE FALLING CLIFF

POV Josh: staring at the yellow glow from the LIGHT STICK as he falls through the darkness. The occasional glimpse of the CLIFF WALL and the WATERFALL flashing by. The sinister HOWL of wind as the air rushes past him.

JOSH (INNER MONOLOGUE)
Here. Now. This is who I am. Who you made me.

INT. FINAL RIVER

BADOOSH! Josh plunges into a deep pool of water at the base of the falls. He breaks the surface, COUGHING and SPLUTTERING before being whisked away by a fast flowing river.

Boulders loom in the dark. Josh steers himself around them as best he can. A cliff wall suddenly materializes. The river is being sucked underground at a ferocious rate. Josh takes a final deep BREATH just as...

INT. OCEAN TUNNEL

Josh is sucked down into the inky blackness. He allows the river to sweep him along. CRUNCH! He is slammed against the side of the tunnel. DING! His DILUENT CYLINDER scrapes along the ceiling. CRACK! His facemask shatters. Josh rips it from his face.

Josh tumbles head over heels, bouncing off the walls on a roller-coaster ride into hell itself. Josh grabs a desperate BREATH from the DILUENT CYLINDER and waves his LIGHT STICK around. POV Josh: in the dim beam, he can see the hazy outline of MARINE CORAL covering the tunnel, suggesting he may be close to the ocean wall.

INT. OCEAN ENTRANCE

The current suddenly subsides and Josh finds himself drifting down a wide tunnel, filled with beautiful CORAL SPONGES. He allows himself to be carried by the current. He has a calm look upon his face. No fear at all.

PFFFT! Every few seconds, he reaches down and takes another BREATH from the DILUENT CYLINDER. Bubbles dance and POP against the ceiling of the tunnel. PFFFT..FFF..F..T..... Suddenly, the DILUENT CYLINDER is empty. Josh smiles, shrugs and lets it fall.

Inverting himself so he's staring up at the ceiling, Josh can see BUBBLES from his previous exhalations forming a tiny AIR POCKET in the ceiling of the cave. He sees his hazy reflection in the bubble. Josh takes a SIP of air from the bubble and watches it trickle further down the tunnel, like mercury.

Josh follows the bubble, gazing in wonder as it gets smaller and smaller with each breath he takes. His reflection steadily reduces until...SHLOOP! A final breath...and the air pocket has gone.

Josh turns away from the ceiling. A school of YELLOW-TAILED JACKS suddenly darts into his light. The fish CIRCLE him, becoming temporary escorts as they lead him further down the tunnel.

POV JOSH: a DREAM-LIKE AURA clouds his vision, slowing his every movement. He's suffering from hypoxia: severe lack of oxygen. His HEARTBEAT can be heard hammering in his chest.

Josh's vision finally starts to narrow. Shapes WARP and SPIN around him. The sound of his HEARTBEAT grows steadily louder until... BLOOMPTH! Josh exhales his final breath.

Josh relaxes. He releases the LIGHT STICK and watches it float away into the darkness. As he sinks to the floor of the cave, he is convinced he can see his father gazing at him from the shadows.

Josh reaches toward him.

Then blackness engulfs him.

INT. SEA CAVE - DAY

Darkness. The distant echo of waves SHUSHING against a shore. Another sound, less defined. The sound of CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER.

Suddenly, a tiny shaft of brilliant white light pierces the gloom. The dime-sized beam tracks slowly across a rock and illuminates Josh's hand. The light moves slowly up his arm and across his chest until it finally caresses his face.

Josh's eyes flicker open.

Staring down at him is the smiling face of six-year old LOCAL BOY wearing a SNORKEL MASK. The boy LAUGHS and waves a YELLOW TAILED SNAPPER in Josh's face.

LOCAL BOY (PIDGIN ENGLISH)
Yes Mista. You wantem pem sum blue fish? Hem ee good tu-mahs!

Josh slowly sits up. He's laying on the shoreline of a sea-cave: a dome-shaped room connected directly to the ocean via a gaping underwater entrance. Blue shafts of light from the ocean flicker across the walls.

Josh gazes up: a skylight in the ceiling casts a brilliant beam of sunlight down into the cave. It's stunningly beautiful. Josh smiles.

The local boy takes Josh by the hand and leads him back into the water. Other children can be seen in the ocean entrance, SPEAR FISHING with snorkeling gear.

The boy continues to LAUGH and CHATTER as he pulls Josh across the surface toward the blue window.

Josh ducks beneath the surface.

EXT. PAPUA NEW GUINEA COASTLINE - DAY

The glassy ocean is rent asunder as Josh breaks the surface. A LOCAL FISHERMAN gazes down at him from his DUGOUT CANOE, a surprised expression on his face.

Josh gulps down a deep BREATH of air. He throws back his head and floats, gazing up at the sun.

FADE TO BLACK